

REASON, ROMANTICISM AND REVOLUTION

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M.N. ROY

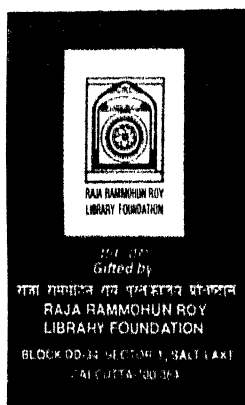
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became its organising secretary. He developed the party organisation and was elected its General Secretary. He converted the Socialist Party into the Communist Party of Mexico at an extraordinary conference. He thus became the founder of the first Communist Party outside Soviet Russia.

Roy was invited to Moscow to attend the Second Conference of the Communist International which was to be held in July-August, 1920. Roy reached Moscow prior to the conference and had discussions with Lenin on the national liberation movements in colonial countries like India and China. He differed with Lenin to some extent on the role of colonial capitalist classes in the movements for national liberation. On Lenin's suggestion, the Theses on the National and Colonial Question prepared by him and those prepared by Roy were both placed before the Second Conference of the Communist International for acceptance. Both the Theses were adopted by the Conference.

Roy came to occupy a high position in all the policy-making bodies of the Communist International. His main work at that time was to develop a Communist movement in India. He managed to send a number of Communist emissaries as well as literature to India. He has been recognised as the founder of the Indian Communist Party.

By 1927 Stalin had started his peculiar tactics for the liquidation or expulsion of all persons of independent thinking from the Russian Communist Party and the Communist International. Roy was one of the victims of those tactics. Roy wrote some articles for the press of what was known as the German Communist Opposition, criticising some of the politics adopted by the Communist International. For this offence he was turned out from the Comintern in 1929.

Roy now decided to go to India, although he knew that he would be arrested in India and would have to suffer a long term of imprisonment. He had been accused No.1 in the famous Kanpur Conspiracy case of 1924, but could not be tried at that time because he was out of India. Roy was prepared to pay the price of a long period of incarceration in order to participate in the Indian freedom movement.

Roy came to India *incognito* in December, 1930, was arrested in

July, 1931 and was tried and sentenced to imprisonment of 12 years on the charge of conspiracy to overthrow the British Government. The sentence was reduced to six years in appeal.

After completing his sentence Roy was released from Jail on 20th November, 1936. Immediately thereafter, he issued a public appeal asking the people to join the Indian National Congress in millions. At the same time, he made it clear that the nationalist movement could not be strengthened unless it underwent a process of radicalisation and democratisation. He urged that the Indian National Congress should be built up from below by organising village and taluka Congress Committees and by vitalising them on the basis of a socio-economic programme of democratic freedom and radical agrarian reform. His idea was to develop the Indian National Congress with its net-work of village and taluka Committees, as a State within the State. The plan was that at an appropriate time, the Congress as the alternate State would give a call for convening a Constituent Assembly to frame the constitution of free India and that the call would be the signal for the launching of the Indian revolution for democratic freedom.

On the basis of this radical programme, the followers of Roy started work in a large number of rural and urban centres in the country and within a couple of years they became a force to be contended with. In 1940, however, Roy and his followers had to part company with the Indian National Congress because of their difference on the issue of India's participation in the Second World War.

When the "phony" stage of the Second World War was over and the Nazi armies invaded France in April, 1940, Roy declared that the war had become an anti-Fascist War and that it was necessary for the very survival of democracy throughout the world that the war efforts of the Allied Powers should be supported at all costs. "If Fascism succeeds in establishing its domination over the whole of Europe", Roy declared, "then good-bye to revolution and good-bye to Indian freedom as well." He also confidently predicted that "the defeat of Fascism will weaken imperialism" and would bring India nearer to the goal of democratic freedom.

The leaders of the Indian National Congress were, however of a different opinion. They declared that the Indian people would

support the war efforts only if the British Government agreed to set up a National Government in India with full autonomy over defence and foreign affairs. Roy disapproved of this offer of conditional support, because it implied that the war efforts would be opposed if the condition was not accepted. Roy argued that since the success in the anti-Fascist war was necessary for India's democratic freedom, we could not put conditions on our offer to help in achieving that success. On this issue Roy and his friends left the Indian National Congress and formed a separate party, called the Radical Democratic Party, in December, 1940.

As early as in December, 1942 Roy expressed the view that the Fascist Powers were going to be defeated in the war and that India would get national freedom as a result of the socio-economic changes which were taking place in Great Britain and the allied countries during the course of the anti-Fascist struggle. Roy's anticipations were proved correct. Historians are agreed that India got national freedom largely as a result of the liberating forces generated by the defeat of international Fascism.

When it became clear to him that the Fascist Powers were going to be defeated in the war, Roy switched his attention to the post-war reconstruction of India. He got prepared two basic documents in 1943 and 1944. one the "Peoples Plan for Economic Development of India" and the second a "Draft Constitution of Free India". The documents contained Roy's original contributions to the country's economic and political problems. Contrary to the economic thinking which was then current, Roy gave priority in the People's Plan to the production of consumer goods, and maintained that not for profit, and the objective of economic planning was to supply the primary needs of the people consisting of food, shelter, clothing, education and medicine. The Indian State according to the Draft Constitution of Free India was to be organised on the basis of a countrywide net-work of Peoples' Committees having wide powers such as initiating legislation, expressing opinion on pending bills, recall of representatives and referendum on important national issues. The idea of Peoples' Committees subsequently popularised by Jayaprakash Narayan was mainly derived from Roy's Draft Constitution of Free India.

After the end of the war, Roy began to express his heretical views

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PREFACE

To The 1989 Reprint

M.N. Roy (Manabendranath Roy) was born in a small village of Bengal in the year 1887. The name Manabendranath Roy he adopted in America when he visited that country in 1916. Before this he was known by Narendranath Bhattacharya—a name given to him by his family. In his early youth he joined the Bengal revolutionaries and soon became a second man to Jotindranath Mukherji, popularly known as Bagha Jotin, the most important leader of the extremists of those days. He hardly had any formal academic trainings. As a matter of fact from 1907 he had no settled life. His leader Jotin sent him to Batavia in search of Arms in April, 1915. He returned to India in June in the same year; but went back to Batavia in August to find out what had happened to the Arms which were to reach India as per arrangements made during his earlier visit. When he reached Batavia he was informed that his leader, Jotin Mukherji, had died in an encounter with the British police and that their plan to smuggle Arms for the Extremists has been betrayed. He decided to continue his search of arms for the Indian revolutionaries. Travelling through Indonesia, Malaya, China and Japan, he reached San Francisco on the 14th of June, 1916 and visited the Stanford University where Dhanagopal Mukherji, a brother of Roy's revolutionary colleague, Jadugopal Mukherji, was teaching. There he met a brilliant young scholar—Evelyn Trent. The two travelled to New York. In June 1917 he was arrested by the New York police but was released. He and Evelyn, by this time had married. The day after his release, Roy and Evelyn jumped to Mexico. In no time he became an important figure in Mexican politics.

The day after Roy and Evelyn left for Mexico, the New York

Police was looking for Roy in connection with San Francisco Hindu-German Conspiracy Case. The news of this case reached the extremist colleagues of Roy in India. Jadu Gopal Mukerjee, a revolutionary colleague of Roy addressed a letter to the Workingman's and Soldier's Council Through M. Leon Trotsky, Commissioner of Foreign Affairs. Petrograd, Russia. Jadugopal addressed the letter as Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Indian Nationalist Party. The address given on top of the letter is "Tagore Castle" Calcutta." (cf. Weekly Report of Director of Govt. Intelligence, dated Simla, the 22nd June 1918). In this letter, after welcoming the success of the Russian Revolution, Jadu Gopal solicited the help of the Russians for revolution in India and also in getting the arrested Indians in connection with the Hindu-German Conspiracy Case in San Francisco released. It is not known whether or not Roy was in touch with his colleagues in India. It is, however, likely that Jadugopal was informed by his brother Dhanagopal of the incarceration of the Indian revolutionaries in the United States. It should also be mentioned here that the case was instituted by the U.S. Government at the behest of the British Government.

Be that as it may; it was in Mexico that Roy acquired a thorough grounding in Marxism. In no time he became an important member of the Mexican Socialist Party and was instrumental in its conversion to a Communist Party. Incidentally, the Mexican Communist Party formed in October, 1919 is the first Communist party outside Russia.

In 1919, persuaded by Borodin, Roy left Mexico on his way to Moscow. By this time his original dream of freeing India with the help of Arms borrowed from the enemies of British Imperialism had undergone a complete metamorphosis. Instead of importing arms for the Indian revolutionaries, he tried to import revolution into India following some Marxist precepta. In no time Roy rose in the leadership of the Communist International.

It may be mentioned that Roy, unlike many Communists of those days, was not a doctrinaire Marxist. Soon he found out that revolutions could not be exported. Revolutions arise more because of internal tensions and accentuation of those tensions. But such work could not be done from outside, hence he returned in cognito to India in December 1930. Meanwhile, his wife and he separated and Evelyn went back to America. In July, 1931 Roy was

arrested in Bombay. After serving a prison term, he was released in November, 1936.

The jail period of Roy's life is the most important period in connection with the present book. While in Jail Roy continued to read voraciously and kept notes of his ideas. These are the unpublished Jail volumes written by Roy. These volumes contain notes, quotations and comments, etc. (It seems that Roy got very much interested in the Philosophical Consequences of Modern Science; possibly because of the claim of the Communists that their Philosophy is scientific. Italian Renaissance also attracted his admiration. But what emerges from these notes is the mind of a man in search of a new philosophy. It will not be completely off the track to say that the germs of Roy's monumental work or even the first rough draft of it can be discerned in these notes. But ideas took a long time to crystalise as Roy was always willing to revise his ideas in the light of criticism by others or self-criticism.

Meanwhile, soon after his release from Jail in November 1936 Roy had married Ellen Gottschalk in early 1937. Roy died in January 1954 and Ellen was snatched away by the cruel hands of murderers in 1960. The imprint of Ellen's mind and hands can be seen by any discerning reader in whatever Roy wrote after 1928 when he met Ellen for the first time in Berlin after his flight from Moscow. Roy was extremely lucky in his wives. His first wife was a brilliant young lady and his second wife was a cook, secretary, intellectual companion, gardener, valet, nurse—all rolled into one. The voluminous writing that Roy did would not have been possible without Ellen. The Roys, unlike many of the political leaders of yesterday and today, lived under extreme financial constraints. As an organiser of the M.N. Roy Archives, I have gone through even the daily accounts of expenditure and receipts maintained by the Roys. A pittance of Rs.50/- per instalment was paid by the Amritbazar Patrica for serialising Roy's *Memoirs* and small amounts were sent by a few admirers and party colleagues. But thanks to Ellen's management no one from outside, even the most intimate ones, could ever guess the poverty in which the two lived. I am writing this as I wish Roy had more money at least to buy books and prepare the manuscripts of his books better.

Before Roy's death the First Volume of this book was published in 1952 and the second volume came out posthumously in 1955.

It may be mentioned that Roy followed the old style of writers

of his days. There are many footnotes to the book. Only the names of the books and their authors are mentioned without any indication of page number, publisher's name, date of publication, etc. The two volumes came out with some obvious printing mistakes. An attempt has been made now to avoid as many printing mistakes as possible.

Roy has mentioned many thinkers of the past without giving hardly any clue as to their country of origin, year of birth, etc. To cover up this defect "A Select List of Names Referred to" has been appended to this book. Owing to lack of Secretarial assistance and financial constraints this reprint of Roy's *"Reason, Romanticism and Revolution"* could not be processed in a manner which it preeminently deserves. Even this volume, where the two volumes of the book have been combined into one, is being published thanks to the enthusiasm of Mr. S. Balwant of Ajanta Publications.

Roy was never an orthodox Marxist. This book gives his philosophical and political ideas. Most certainly one may call it an anti-Marxist book. But such a statement will be a bit off the track. Roy delved deep into world history to ascertain the function of reason in making the history of mankind. He concentrated more on Western historiography than on the history of any other part of the world, say India, for obvious reasons. He rightly points out that "In the present stage of world history, pending the composition of a universal history, the evolution of thought in the Western world has to be taken as the general pattern." Roy's motivation for this enquiry is the same as that of all thinkers of the past—the humanisation of human being. The human being is being dehumanised as thinkers and the leaders in the past neglected the development of the essentials of man. Man according to Roy is essentially rational. In his rationality lies his glory. Rationality in man is neither a gift from Providence nor a gift from his status in the social structure. Man's rationality is a biological inheritance. The universe is law-governed. Arising out of a law-governed universe, the biological world is also law-governed. Man as a part of the law-governed biological world is also law-governed. The distinction of man is that he recognises and discovers this law-governedness of the universe and his biological inheritance in a much more distinctive way than any other being who is also law-governed, but whose recognition of this law-governedness of his biological and physical inheritance is at a very elementary level.

Only man, because his inherent rationality is fervantly in quest of freedom a quest which can be discerned in nascent forms in others biological special also. Human his history is the story of man's adventure for freedom. This is the basic metaphysical proposition of Roy.

If man is essentially rational, the products of his rationality should also be rational. That which is irrational is ipso facto evil. Conflict between man and man, man's cruelty, etc., are products of his irrationality, hence are immoral.

Roy through his extensive reading has shown that whenever man has forgotten his rational nature, he has brought about nothing but disasters to himself. Ideas which are products of man's rationality when warped by extra-rational considerations have brought in miseries to man. The ancient Greeks emphasised the importance of human beings and declared that man is the measure of everything. But human cussedness, or call it what you will, made man forget this wisdom. Again during the period of the European Renaissance and Enlightenment man was reminded of his essential humanity which lies within himself. Marx made him an automaton in the vortex of class-struggle. He thought revolutions will be ushered in by class-struggle. Roy holds that class-struggles never motivated any revolution. It is ideas which motivated revolutions. Though the ideas arise out man's reaction to physical existence, they acquire a life of their own, as it were, once they are formulated. Marx started with a correct premise that man is a part of the physical universe and not something thrown into the physical universe by an omniscient God and always in perpetual fear of Divine retribution. Roy held that "The positive elements of Marxism freed from the fallacies and clarified in the light of greater scientific knowledge, are consistent with a more comprehensive philosophy which can be called Integral or Radical Humanism, a philosophy which combines mechanistic cosmology, materialist metaphysics, secular rationalist ethics..." Marx failed to appreciate that "once the biologically determined process of ideation is complete, ideas are formed, they continue to have an autonomous existence and an evolutionary process of their own, which runs parallel to the physical process of social evolution. The parallel processes, ideal and physical, constitute history. Both are determined by their respective logic or dynamics or dialectics. At the same time they are mutually influenced, the one by the other." And

further, "The two histories, the history of thought and the history of social events, are in some periods so very intertwined that they cannot be easily disentangled. Hence the confusion about their genesis and interconnection." After citing many instances from history when ideas—ideas arising independent of the individual's social existence or his social background—have influenced subsequent history, Roy concludes that always social revolutions have been preceded by a revolution in the realm of idea. Marx and his ideas are standing testimonies against what Marx tried to put forward. The revolution in Russia is another instance of the priority of ideas and a falsification of the thesis that ideas arise only from social conditions. Roy has specially drawn our attention to the rise of liberalism. The philosopher of liberalism is Thomas Hobbes. Marxists tell us that liberalism is a philosophy of the bourgeoisie. But where were the bourgeoisie at the time of Hobbes. It is true that the rising bourgeoisie found in liberalism a very handy crutch to lean on; but that does not make liberal ideas a product of the bourgeoisie. Roy cites many instances of this type and maintains that revolution in the realm of ideas has generally preceded physical revolution.

Man in whose brain ideas originate, also has the idea of seeing to it that his ideas get practical shapes. It is here that romanticism—the will to actualise ideas creeps in and revolutions take place. There is a continuous rational chain from reason to romanticism to revolution. But sometimes romanticism overwhelms ideas and distorts them and leads to excesses of revolution. Fascism and Communism, nay all social arrangements are products of romanticism—a perfectly rational wish. But excesses of romanticism have often made man to overlook or even sidetrack his original ideas and land the society and man into evil. Roy insists that both romanticism and its by-product revolution are perfectly rational processes whereas their excesses are not. The measure of determining whether an idea is good for humanity or not is reasonableness of the idea. A rational idea, according to Roy, is by definition good. The rational is not only the real as the Universe is a law-governed universe but also the moral.

Roy's statement that the rational is real and moral should not be confused with similar Hegelian statements. For Roy does not think that the historical process is a determined process in the sense in which Hegel or Marx understood the concept of determination.

Roy's concept of determination includes the concept of freedom, not the idealistic concept of freedom of a Hegel or a Green, or a crude concept of freedom of Marx—but a rational concept of freedom as he sees the entire history of man as a record of his adventures for freedom—a freedom on this earth earned by man himself, for himself and for others. Roy does not agree with the proposition that while man is ceaselessly struggling for his freedom, he is only an instrument in the hand of an almighty God or an instrument in the hands of the ceaseless process of class-struggle since the origin of private property. Scientific ideas of necessity and determinedness are not antithetical to freedom.

Roy's emphasis on the realm of ideas and priority of ideas naturally lead to a different technique of revolution. Revolution in the realm of ideas must precede physical revolution. Revolution in ideas cannot be ushered in by slogan shouting and gun wielding.

Even while in jail Roy thought of the idea of an intellectual revolution. From jail Roy wrote to Ellen to seek the help of his Berlin colleagues—Brandler and Thailheimer to set up a branch of the Frankfurt Institute in India with its programme of research and research publications. But most of Roy's associates in Europe, specially those who were in Germany, had to face abysmal difficulties for holding anti-Hitler and anti-Stalin views. Some were crushed under the Stalinist Juggernaut, some faced the satanic Hitlerite Putsch, while others left all connections with politics. Roy alone, sitting in seclusion with his wife, continued his youthful dream of adventures in quest of freedom. An intellectual renaissance was essential for the future of his country. But that renaissance must have a philosophically convincing base. The present book attempts to provide that base. It is a product of his life-long encounter with forces of evil, irrationality and crass inhumanity. No student of politics, literature, history and philosophy should avoid this book. The book is a standing testimony to man's quest for freedom.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

GEORGE WILHELM FREDRICH HEGEL (1770-1831) said that the history of Philosophy was the history of the world. Having learned from him, Marx corrected the master and declared that the history of civilisation was the history of class struggle. A whole century has passed since these apparently contradictory doctrines of historiology were expounded. The contradiction is apparent, because both Hegel and Marx regarded history as an organic evolutionary process of becoming unfolded by its own dynamics. Because the contradiction is apparent, even now the controversy is not settled, dispassionate thinkers finding it difficult to choose one or the other view.

Jule Michelet (1798-1874) advanced yet another dynamic doctrine of historiology, a generation before Marx and independent of Hegel, which seemed to combine the two apparently conflicting views. Feeling dissatisfied with the conventional views of history, the would-be historian of the French Revolution searched for a new method of writing history as a science. He hit upon the idea that philology, the study of the origin of languages, might yield a clue to the secret of the past history of peoples. The philological approach to the problems of historiology led Michelet to the conclusion that history was mingled with philosophy. In the introduction to his projected, but never finished, *Universal History*, Michelet wrote in 1830 : "With the world began a war, which will end only with the world : the war of man against nature, of spirit against matter, of liberty against fatality. History is nothing other than the record of this interminable struggle."

One hundred years before Michelet's effort to make a new science of history, an obscure teacher of Roman Law at Naples, Giambattista Vicco (1668-1774), had written a treatise on the *Principles of a New Science dealing with the Nature of Nations, through which*

are shown also *New Principles of the Natural Law of Peoples*. Michelet discovered a kindred spirit in Vico—a pioneer who had blazed a new trail of historical research. The central theme of Vico's, until then little known, work was that humanity is its own creation. Insisting upon the method that the facts of known history must be referred back to their primitive origin, in order to be properly appreciated, Vico established what he called "this incontestable truth : the social world is certainly the work of man." The corollary to this incontestable truth was "that one can and should find its principles in the modifications of human intelligence itself."

Young Michelet writing "on the burning pavements of Paris", in the midst of the July Revolution of 1830, was struck by Vico's anthropological, philological and sociological approach to the problems of historical research. He was, as he himself declared, "seized by a frenzy caught from Vico, an incredible intoxication with his great historical principles". Michelet did not live long enough to write his *Universal History* to show how history and philosophy had been intertwined through the ages. But he had the occasion to proclaim that "all science is one : language, literature, history, physics, mathematics and philosophy ; subjects which seem to be the most remote from one another are in reality connected, or rather they all form a single system."

So, the organic view of history is not the result of Marx putting his master on his feet. As a matter of fact, Marx and Engels had read Michelet, and Vico's ideas were also not unknown to them. On the other hand, the "new science" born at Naples had reached the German seats of learning through Leibniz (1646-1716), Baron Christian Wolff (1679-1754), Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), Lessing (1729-1781), Goethe and other scholars and philosophers. Herder knew of Vico's work before he wrote his *Ideas Towards the Philosophy of the History of Mankind*; Vico's influence can be detected also in Hegel's philosophy of history.

Vico, in his turn, had read Francis Bacon's (1561-1626) work. Unkind critics of the time thought that the *Scienza Nuova* was a plagiarism of *Novum Organum*. That was, of course, malicious ; but it is a fact that Vico's work was cast on the pattern of Bacon's researches. It was from that Vico admittedly got the idea of applying to the study of human history the inductive method which Bacon had recommended for the study of natural history. Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) had made a philological study of history,

theology and philosophy, in order to discover the universal laws of nations. Having studied his works, Vico conceived of the possibility of applying similar methods for discovering the general laws of history. The dynamics of ideas can be traced all the way back to the great thinkers of the remotest antiquity.

Tracing the chain of thought in modern times, one finds Friedrich Kurt Von Savigny (1779-1861) recognising a similarity between Vico's doctrine of historical jurisprudence and his own. The preface to Hegel's lectures on the philosophy of history published in 1837 mentions Vico as one of the three, the other two being Herder and Friedrich Von Schlegel (1772-1829), who had treated the subject previously. The first German translation of Vico's *Universal Law*, published in 1884, carried an introduction which pointed out the similarity of Hegel's ideas with the doctrines of the Italian historian, expounded more than a hundred years before. Moreover, it is quite possible that Hegel felt Vico's influence through the intermediary of Rousseau, who was at Venice when the finalised version of *Scienza Nuova* was published there. Judging from his *Essay on the Origin of Languages*, one can assume that Rousseau had picked up from Vico the idea of the Philological approach as the clue to the problems of the origin of society.

"Marx and Engels seem to have taken from Vico, perhaps in the first place through Michelet, but later at first hand, the formula that 'men make their own history', from which their Historical Materialism was developed.....Historical Materialism, in this sense, went beyond anything directly asserted by Vico, but as it seemed to his Marxist interpreters, in a direction in which he himself had gone a long way."¹

Labriola was the first to give a systematic shape to the Marxian materialist conception of history. In his essays on the subject, he recognises Vico as the forerunner of Marx. Later on, Paul Lafargue more explicitly showed that the Marxist view of history could be traced back to Vico through Lewis Morgan. Early in his intellectual career, Marx himself had read Vico. In 1861, he expressed surprise at Lassalle's not having read *Scienza Nuova*, and admired "its philosophic conception of the spirit of the Roman Law." In a footnote to *Capital*, Vico is actually mentioned as having said that "the essence of the distinction between human history and natural history is that the former is made by man and the latter is

not." An exhaustive study of the works of Vico led Georges Sorel to the conclusion that "Vico's idiogenetic laws anticipated the Marxist doctrine that ideas are functions of the mode of production." Finally, Benedetto Croce (1866-1952) has revealed the Vicoean ancestry of Marxism : "Marx and Sorel have brought to maturity Vico's idea of the struggle of classes and the rejuvenation of society by a return to a primitive state of mind and new barbarism".²

There is an unbroken chain of the evolution of ideas which refuses to conform either with the Hegelian doctrines of development through conflicts or the Marxist dogma of economic determinism, although it does corroborate Hegel's philosophy of history rather than that of Marx. Vico learned from Bacon and Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), but expounded his new science of history as a critic of the doctrine of Natural Law. On the other hand, he can hardly be called an ideologist of the proletarian revolution. He was a Catholic. "Humanity is its own creation ; but God alone is great ;"—Vico could not get away from such self-contradictory notions. Yet, he did anticipate the Marxist interpretation of history, which is explicitly anti-religious and atheistic.

Materialism is the essence of the Marxist system. But it did not originate with Marx. It is as old as human thought. Rationalism of the primitive man subordinated him to the gods. Philosophy was born of the earliest revolt against that original fall of man. Ever since then, it has had a dynamics of its own.

In the last analysis, history is the record of man's struggle for freedom. Social evolution is a continuation of the biological evolution taking place on a higher level, where the struggle for existence, to be more effective, becomes co-operative and collective. That is why history is an organic evolutionary process.

Aristotle was the first to conceive history as a rational evolutionary process. The organic conception of history was taken over by the Stoics, who dominated European thought until it came under the influence of Christian theology as expounded by St. Augustin. After a whole millennium of scholasticism, the rationalist view of human progress was revived by the men of the Renaissance. That was a demonstration of rationalism and romanticism being two parallel currents of thought which intermingled themselves to make history. The romanticists of the Renaissance themselves argued that "It was absurd to regard the whole period

from Constantin to Columbus as a mere empty chasm separating two kindred ages of Enlightenment; on the contrary, it was necessary to perceive beneath the surface of things one continuous process slowly working itself out in this and every age."³

Historically speaking, there were two Aristotles: the author of *Metaphysic* and *Logic*, claimed as the philosophical authority of mediaeval Christian theology; and the author of *Politics* and *Ethics*. The latter was completely forgotten until the Arabs resurrected him and introduced him to Europe, to be taken over by the Renaissance Humanists. The evolutionary view of human progress was thereafter elaborated by a galaxy of luminaries in the firmament of the world of thought. Finally, Hegel shaped it as the key to world history or the history of civilization. "He saw the whole process of the political development of the human race as a gradual realisation of the idea of freedom."⁴ That evidently is the common ground for Hegel's Idealism and Marxian Materialism. Any hiatus in the evolution of thought since the dawn of civilisation is only imagined by those who claim to have sucked out of their thumbs a whole philosophy of the future which has no past. The history of thought is the key to the history of civilisation, because it can be logically reconstructed.

To keep some sort of record of the past in the form of legends and mythologies has been a common practice with all ancient peoples. But the writing of history did not begin until the Greeks, with their remarkable rational and secular approach to every problem of human existence, appeared on the scene of antiquity. The progressively triumphant, age-long struggle for the spiritual emancipation of man began when in 585 B.C. an eclipse took place according to the prediction of Thales. That epoch-making experience suggested to the bold Ionian thinkers the idea that physical phenomena were not brought about by the caprices of countless gods. With the awakening of an insatiable curiosity, they began to enquire into everything, including the past of the human race. The Hegelian view that philosophy is the clue to history, that "history is philosophy teaching by example"; (Viscount Henry St. John, Bolingbroke: (1678-1751), originated with Thucydides, and was expounded almost in its modern form by Dionysius of Halicarnassus in the first century B.C. Philosophy having inspired the writing of history, its history, logically as well as empirically, provided the motive force of the history of civilisation, which is, as Michelet

said, " the story of man's struggle against nature, the war of liberty against fatality."

During the thousand years when the secular spirit of enquiry was overwhelmed by the Christian faith, history naturally became a handmaid of theology. But that also was a blessing in disguise. Patristic historiography was the creator of the science of history. The history of man, from his fall in the Garden of Eden to his redemption, could not be imagined except as an evolutionary process, a causal chain of events. Even the dogma of predestination is essentially a rational concept. After the miracle of creation, nothing comes out of nothing ; every step in man's life, towards salvation or redemption, is caused—indeed, by the will of God, but nonetheless caused. That is a rational view, which Patristic historians had to develop in order to fortify the position of the Catholic Church. The *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius, written early in the fourth century, was the first attempt to write a history of human society, since the ancient Greeks. St. Augustin's *Civitas Dei*, written a century later, was a landmark in world literature, not because of the effort to rationalise the Nicean creed, but because in spite of itself it was the first essay in the philosophy of history.

Matter is indestructible ; so are ideas. A thousand years of almost impenetrable darkness could not extinguish the fire of the spirit of enquiry kindled by the founders of science and philosophy. Disowned by Christian Europe, the inspiring tradition of man's early struggle against nature was treasured by the infidel Arabs, who eventually passed it on to the natural heirs, so to say. Learning from the Greek masters, particularly Aristotle, a succession of Arab scholars from the tenth century onwards, occupied themselves with the science of history. The culmination was Ibn Khaldun's *Universal History*, written at the close of the fourteenth century. It was such a profound treatise on the philosophy of history that Ibn Khaldun has been called "the founder of the science of history."⁵ The Arabic culture, inspired by the secular and rational spirit of the ancient Greek philosophers, reached Europe through the Universities of Spain and Italy. Its contribution to the European Renaissance was incalculable. With the humanist revival of secularised history, a cycle of the dynamics of ideas was completed. Embodying the precious heritage of the past, stretching out to the remotest antiquity, Vico indicated the future development. The philosophy of history and the history of philosophy mingled in

his work. Therefore Vico was hailed by Michelet as his master, and Michelet harmonised the apparently contradictory Hegelian and Marxian views of history.

Vico spoke of "two histories—of languages and of things." By 'things' he evidently meant human acts—social and political. If events were given a wider connotation, history would have to include at least geology. Vico suggested that philology should be considered as a part of history. That was a great idea, which revealed the intimate connection between history, and philosophy, because, philology is also a part of philosophy. The earlier stages of the history of philosophy merge into the history of language. The method of the science of history is criticism, as observation and experiment are the methods of the physical sciences. The past is to be studied for a rational explanation of the present. The discovery of a rational connection between the past and the present of the human race shows of history as an evolutionary process. Consequently, it becomes possible to deduce some general laws governing historical events.

But the past is not there for the historian to study. There are only records. They are of two kinds—physical (implements, ruins of buildings, relics of art and crafts, etc.) and written documents, which can be called mental or spiritual records. The latter are of the primary importance, because only with their help can the significance of the physical records be fully appreciated. Philology is the instrument for reconstructing a universal history of the past on the basis of a criticism of written records. History of languages thus is a part of the science of history. On the other hand, words originate in course of the process of biological evolution to serve as vehicles for the expression and communication of primitive emotions and ideas. Languages develop to serve the purpose of coordinating disjointed ideas and emotions. So, the history of languages is the early history of the evolution of thought—the history of primitive philosophy. Since without the aid of philology no history could be written, to that extent, Hegel was right in saying that the history of philosophy was the history of civilisation. Most probably, he got the idea from Vico's doctrine of two histories. The fact, however, is that by a critical study of the records of the past, history discovers the hidden springs of human action. So, the past can be reconstructed more accurately as the history of thought. If Hegel's dictum is stated in Croce's words—"all true

historians are willy-nilly philosophers"—then it can be appreciated as containing the generally acceptable truth about history.

The materialist conception of history, to identify the history of civilisation with the history of class struggle, loses all sense if intelligence is accorded no place in the process of social evolution. In that case, Marxism as a philosophy of action will have no leg to stand on, and revolutions will be impossible. They are historically necessary, but they are also made by men moved by the idea of revolution. However, it is palpably absurd to regard history as a succession of events brought about by the automatic development of the means of production. Man cannot be eliminated from the evolutionary process of history. Social forces are not metaphysical categories; they are the collective expression of the creativeness of man, and the creative man is always a thinking man.

Economic determinism in social evolution and cultural history does not necessarily follow from Materialism. The one is only a method of interpreting history, while the other is a philosophy. Philosophically, Materialism must concede objective reality to ideas. It can claim absoluteness only in epistemology. History, particularly cultural history, is also ideologically determined. Therefore, it is an error to conceive Historical Determinism as purely economic. History is determined, but there are more than one determining factor. Moreover, determinism is a logical concept. It is inherent in a determined process that no extraneous factor intervenes; because, in that case, the process becomes dualistic, while Monism is inherent in the logical concept of determinism. Materialism is the only logically perfect philosophy, because it alone makes Monism possible. Therefore, determinism is inherent in Materialism. But economic determinism, being a dualist concept, cannot be necessarily related to Materialism.

Philosophically, the materialist conception of history must recognise the creative role of intelligence. Materialism cannot deny the objective reality of ideas. They are not *sui generis*; they are biologically determined; priority belongs to the physical being, to matter, if the old-fashioned term may still be used. But once the biologically determined process of ideation is complete, ideas are formed, they continue to have an autonomous existence, an evolutionary process of their own, which runs parallel to the physical process of social evolution. The two parallel processes, ideal and

physical, compose history. Both are determined by their respective logic or dynamics or dialectics. At the same time, they are mutually influenced, the one by the other. That is how history becomes an organic process. If the present can be convincingly explained by a more rational understanding of the past, then it will be evident that only a synthesis of Idealism and Materialism, more correctly speaking, a dispassionate and comprehensive appreciation of the entire heritage of human thought, can be the only philosophy of the future. Such a non-partisan philosophy will throw a flood of light on the thick gloom which to-day hangs on the horizon, and blaze new trails for humanity, out of the present impasse.

To put the proposition more precisely, what is needed is a restatement of Materialism so as to recognise explicitly the decisive importance of the dynamics of ideas in all the processes of human evolution—historical, social, political and cultural. Epistemologically, Idealism stands rejected. The old problem of perception, which baffled philosophy for ages, has been solved by modern Materialism with the aid of the latest knowledge of physiology. The gulf between physics and psychology thus is no longer unbridgeable. A bridge is thrown across by merging psychology into physiology. All components of the most highly developed organism can be reduced to carbon compounds which are physico-chemical substances. Vitalism cannot introduce a mysterious metaphysical factor, such as Bergson's *elan vital* or Driesch's *entelechy*, in the process of biological evolution, without leaving the ground of experimental science. In so far as Idealism takes philosophy beyond the radius of experience, and invokes supersensual categories, it is hardly distinguishable from religion. As such, it is of no use for man in the quest for freedom. It is long since Plato's Universals have been relegated to the realm of poetry. Honest and consistent idealist philosophy has had little to add to the ancient Sage. Modern Idealism since Rene Descartes (1596-1650) could never get out of the vicious circle of dualism, which stultifies Philosophy because it leads to religion. Notwithstanding his transcendentalism, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was more of a materialist than usually perceived. The monist Idealism of Benedict Spinoza (1632-1677) and Hegel was inverted Materialism.

In so far as it claims nothing more than that ideas have an independent history of their own, that the history of philosophy is the

master-key to the problem of reconstructing the history of the race, from the dawn of civilization, Idealism flows into Materialism, the two together providing a comprehensive explanation of the past and present, and a rational guide for mankind exploring the still unknown depths of the future.

"Quick transitions to new types of civilisation are only possible when thought has run ahead of realisation. The vigour of the race then pushes forward into the adventure of imagination. The world dreams of things to come, then, in due season, arouses itself to their realisation. Given the vigour of adventure, sooner or later, the leap of imagination reaches beyond the safe limits of the epoch, and beyond the safe limits of the learned rules of taste. It then produces the dislocation and confusion marking the advent of new ideals for civilized efforts."⁶

No sensible materialist would find any difficulty in sharing this view of a front rank idealist philosopher of our time. There is no other way to explain how great revolutions take place in history. History is made more by the brain of man than by his brawn. Without recognising ideas as the driving force of history, the materialist conception of history becomes a very superficial doctrine, and historical determinism a fallacious proposition. The view that social evolution and even cultural history are determined entirely by the operation of economic forces cannot be logically deduced from Materialism nor can it be empirically verified. Even in the narrow sense of a social philosophy, Marxism is not identical with economic determinism. The social, political and cultural history is determined, because nature is a cosmos—a law-governed rational system. But just as in nature, there are more than one determining factor in history. Human intelligence is one of them. Cultural history, particularly, is ideally determined to a very large extent.

The materialist conception of history fails when it dismisses the ideal systems (ideologies) as mere superstructures based on economic relations, and tries to relate them directly with the material conditions of life. The logical development of ideas and the generation of new social forces take place simultaneously, together providing the motive force of history. But in no given period can they be causally connected except in the sense that action is always motivated by ideas. A new idea must be referred back to an old idea. Philosophy has a history of its own, and it is not a kalei-

doscope of phantoms. Inasmuch as action is motivated by ideas, determinism in history is primarily ideal. Historical Determinism comes to grief whenever its exponents take a superficial, one-sided view, ignoring the dynamics of ideas.

From time to time, the march of history is obstructed by the requirements of the established social order, which sets a limit to human creativeness, mental as well as physical. The urge for progress and freedom, born out of the biological struggle for existence, asserts itself with a renewed vigour to break down the obstacle. A new social order conducive to a less hampered unfolding of human potentialities is visualised by men, embodying the liberating ideas and cultural values created in the past. A new philosophy is born out of the spiritual heritage of mankind, to herald a reorganisation of society.

The passionate belief in the creativeness and freedom of man is the essence of the romantic view of life. The idea of revolution, therefore, is a romantic idea; at the same time, it is rational because revolutions take place of necessity. Revolution, thus, may appear to be a self-contradictory concept. Can reason and romanticism be fitted into the self-same evolutionary process? That is the fundamental problem of the philosophy of history.

The rational order of nature and history is determined; it must run its course; it cannot be changed by any human endeavour. That rationalist view seems to exclude the possibility of revolution. But there is another way of looking at the thing without abandoning the rationalist position. Human will is a part of nature; it also grows out of the rational order. Man's desire, and endeavours in pursuance thereof, are also determined; therefore, revolutions take place of necessity; they are historically determined. As mutations in history, they are inherent in the rational process of social evolution.

The difference between reason and romanticism is that one perceives what is necessary and therefore possible, whereas the other declares impetuously what is desirable, what should be done. Is the idea of revolution, then irrational? Is there no room for reason in the scheme of revolutionary practice? There must be, if revolutions take place of necessity. Romanticism tempered with reason, and rationalism enlivened by the romantic spirit of adventure, pave the road to successful revolutions.

The apparently baffling problem stated above arises from a syl-

logistic interpretation of the complicated warp and woof of actual life, unfolding itself in the context of the rational system of nature. Rationalism is the intellectual and moral sanction for the classical view of life. On the other hand, romanticism is a revolt against the classical conservative attitude; therefore, it is irrational. This syllogistic simplification confuses theological rationalism with the secular concept of reason. The latter is identical with human intelligence, and therefore cannot be antithetical to will. In the last analysis, there is no contradiction between rationalism and the romantic view of life. The two are harmonised in the idea of revolution. If romanticism is the urge of the will of man to break out of the elaborate chains of tradition, orthodoxy and theological reason, then it is the most powerful incentive to revolution.

The romantic view of life is subjective. It logically leads to the liberating doctrine that man is the maker of the world, developed during a whole period of history from Vico to Marx. Indeed, it originated earlier, in the Renaissance, which represented the revolt of man against the tyranny of teleological reason and the theological moral order. On the other hand, secular rationalism, developed in the modern scientific view of life, is objective. It places man, grown out of the background of an evolutionary process in the context of a law-governed physical Universe, in the centre of the world, ultimately subject to the laws of nature, but having the possibility, if not every time the actual power, of progressively acquiring mastery over it. Essentially, there is little difference between the two views of life. Modern psychology has eliminated the distinction between the subject and the object. By doing so, it has solved the old problem of perception, and freed philosophy from the vicious circle of epistemology.

Marxism is an attempted synthesis between the two apparently antithetical views of life—the rationalist and the romantic. Perhaps Marx himself was not aware of the far-reaching implication of his philosophy; therefore, it remained full of fallacies, which could be explained only by dogmatic interpretations and spurious interpolations. The attempt will have to be completed so as to combine the various currents of past thought into a comprehensive system of the philosophy of life. But thereafter, new contradictions will arise, and the history of philosophy as well as of society will go on and on for ever. That philosophy is sublime

which opens up before mankind the vista of infinity without deluding it into the wilderness of metaphysical abstractions and fantasies.

NOTES

1. Introduction to the Autobiography of Giambattista Vico; Translated by Max Harold Fisch and Thomas Goddard Bergin; Cornell University Press, 1944
2. Benedetto Croce, *The Philosophy of Giambattista Vico*.
3. F.J.C. Hearnshaw, *The Science of History*.
4. *Ibid*.
5. Robert Flint, *History of the Philosophy of History*.
6. A.N. Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*.

Chapter II

HUMAN NATURE

More than two hundred and fifty thousand years have passed since the origin of the human species. It is rather an arbitrary estimate, because anthropology has discarded the hypothesis of monogenesis. However, the point is that only a small fraction of the time during which the human race has inhabited the earth comes under the purview of recorded history. Another period is covered by legends, myths, mythologies and epics. The historical value of those superstitious, poetical, imaginary and hear-say accounts of prehistory is of late being increasingly appreciated. Eventually, the scope of history proper may be extended backwards. Even then, by far the larger part of the time since the origin of the human species will remain in the realm of prehistory. Yet, whatever is constant in human nature was formed during those remote days. Anthropology will have to dig deep in that subsoil in order to discover the hidden springs of the mental evolution of the species.

The history of the infancy and adolescence of the human species coincides with the process of biological evolution. It is therefore, subsequent history, the history of civilisation, is to be regarded as an organic evolutionary process; and it can be rationally explained only when it is so conceived. The history of the infancy and adolescence of the human race has to be biologically reconstructed—as stages in the process of the biological evolution of the species. The biological approach to pre-history, the history of early savagery, throws a flood of light on the age-old problem of human nature.

The knowledge about the descent of man rules out the doctrine of creation. The appearance of man on earth having no other reason than the origin of a new biological species, the laws of the development of the human race cannot be essentially different from the

general laws of organic evolution. Human nature, therefore, is determined by those laws. Subject to an evolutionary process, it cannot be an immutable category. It is a hackneyed saying that human nature never changes. The truth, however, is just the contrary : To change is human nature. Otherwise, there is no sense in regarding the history of civilisation as an evolutionary process.¹ Yet, just as life is the red thread running through the whole process of biological evolution, similarly, there is a residue of "humanness" underlying the flux of the process even before it has gone beyond the borderland where the primitive man is still not fully differentiated from his animal ancestry. The origin of humanness, therefore, antedates the origin of the species. That is a logical corollary to the doctrine of descent. The origin of a new species is a mutation in the process of evolution. The qualitative change, however, is superficially functional; the biological form involved in the process undergoes no essential change, anatomically or physiologically. In structure and size, the brain of the primitive man differs very little from that of the anthropoid ape. The one inherits the mental and emotional equipments of the other as the basis of "humanness" which, therefore, is a direct outcome of the process of biological evolution ever since the origin of organic matter.

Notwithstanding any obstinate scepticism in that respect, science has abolished the hiatus between inanimate nature and the organic world. Life grows out of the background of non-living matter. There is a causal connection between the two. It would be going beyond the purview of this work to dispel all doubt on that score. The point of departure is the scientific view which rules out the doctrine of creation as an unnecessary hypothesis. The physical Universe is a cosmos; living nature is a part of that law-governed system; it logically follows that the processes of organic evolution are also determined. Empirical knowledge, which culminated in the discoveries of Charles Robert Darwin (1809-1882) and Alfred Russel Wallace (1823-1913), corroborated this logical hypothesis. It went into the formulation of the doctrine of evolution, which represented discovery of reason in living nature. "Just as physiology has found no case of interference with the order of nature as revealed by physics and chemistry, the study of evolution has brought to light no principle which cannot be observed in the experience of ordinary life and successfully submitted to the analysis of reason."²

Taking place in the context of the law-governed physical Universe, biological evolution is also a rational process. Life is neither an inexplicable category called intuition, nor is it a mysteriously purposive urge; it is a determined physical process. In metaphysical terms, it is the unfolding of reason in nature. But reason itself is not a metaphysical category; it was not conceived as such until the necessity for rationalising the irrationalism of the so-called revealed religions was felt. Then, the concept of reason was identified with the ad hoc doctrine of Providence in order to mitigate the absurdity of the notion of an anthropomorphic God, and to fit both the notion of God and the doctrine of Providence into philosophical thought (theology), which developed throughout the ages under the impact of reason inherited by the human species as a primitive instinct from its immediate animal ancestry. Reason is the simple, instinctive, notion that every object of experience is connected with some other object or objects which may or may not have been already experienced; but, because of the belief in the connection, which holds the world of experience together, their existence is assumed. Belief is to be defined as a conviction regarding matters of fact. This notion determined all the forms of early human thought, such as magic, fetishism, animism and natural religion.

Consciousness is the property of life in the zoological world. It means to be aware of the environments. Simple awareness is presently supplemented by reactions to the things of which the organism becomes aware. From that stage of biological evolution, there begins the growth of the nervous system to serve as the means of inter-relations between the organism and its environment. The growth culminates in the formation of the brain which, physiologically, is called the mind. So, mind is the highest expression of the property of life called consciousness; and thought, that of reaction to simple awareness. The mind becomes conscious of the environments, the radius of which gradually expands until the entire nature is embraced. It being consciousness of a law-governed system, human mind is necessarily rational in essence.

In other words, the intellectual and spiritual life of the primitive man was conditioned by the elemental instinct of reason. It is an instinct, because it is a product of pre-human biological evolution. "The very beasts associate the idea of things that are like each other or that have been found together in their experience; they

could hardly survive for a day if they ceased to do so."³ In his later works, Darwin had shown that every aspect of the mental constitution of man could be referred back to animal mentality. A whole succession of anthropologists and historians of culture subsequently developed the idea. Robert Briffault, for example, wrote in 1927 that "a scientific psychology has become possible since the fact has been apprehended that the human mind is built upon a foundation of primal impulses common to all forms of life, of instincts similar to those which shape animal behaviour." .

Conceptual thought distinguishes the mind of the savage from that of the anthropoid ape. But let it be repeated that even then there is little anatomical or morphological difference. Conceptual thought depends on language. So, it can be said that man is fully differentiated from his animal ancestry only when he coins words for expressing definite ideas. But from this it does not follow that memory, some very primitive ability of associating things and events, and the habit of expressing emotions through behaviour, are altogether absent in lower animals. Indeed, they do communicate feelings through articulate sounds. Koehler's experiments with chimpanzees are the most instructive in this connection. He came to the conclusion that they had "a high degree of intelligence" enabling them to solve practical problems. But their thought and the resulting action are dependent entirely on stimuli from objects in their field of vision.⁴ The step from that mental state to the human mind capable of conceptual thought is long. The causal chain of mental evolution, however, is not broken. Memory is the ultimate basis of conceptual thought, and animals do possess memory. That is evident from their observable behaviour. Language enables the savage to attach labels to the mental equipments inherited from the animal ancestry, and consequently it becomes easier for him to remember past experiences and differentiate one object of experience from another. The result is the origin of conceptual thought—thinking stimulated by mental images.

An insight into the biological substrata of the mental and emotional life of the *homo sapiens* compels rejection of the time-honoured dictum that human nature is to believe. The scientific basis of this tendentious doctrine, which served the purpose of bolstering up the irrationalism of revealed religion at the cost of reason, is an uncritical acceptance of the evidence of the supers-

titions of the savage, which survived the infancy and adolescence of the race, and are found still lingering in civilised society. The venerable doctrine about the constant of human nature can be differently stated : Man is naturally superstitious. Superstition being the result of ignorance, the corollary to the doctrine would be that ignorance is the natural state of man. Differently formulated, we have the traditional saying "ignorance is bliss".

Anthropology and critical history of culture have traced the superstitions of the savage to his instinctive rationality—nothing comes out of nothing, everything is caused by something else. The idea was far from being as clear as that in the mind of the savage. Therefore, it must be called instinctive; it was still a matter of biological mechanism, determined by the latter's causal connection with the cosmos of the physical Universe. In other words, instinctive rationality was a vague feeling on the part of the primitive man; and elemental feelings are automatic biological reactions. Instinctive rationality rules out belief in anything supernatural. Man being a part of nature, as long as he clings to the mother's breast, his mind cannot possibly conceive of anything outside nature. The idea of God as well as of anything supernatural is entirely absent in the mind of the savage. Researches into the origin of civilisation led John Lubbock (1834-1913), for instance, to the conclusion that "atheism" was the characteristic feature of the mentality of the primitive man, "understanding by this term not a denial of the existence of a deity, but an absence of any definite idea on the subject."⁵ The same authority is more explicit in another place. "The lowest races have no religion; when what may perhaps be in a sense called religion first appears, it differs essentially from ours; it is an affair of this world, not of the next; the deities are mortal, not immortal, a part, not authors, of nature." Again, "Even among the higher races, we find that the words now denoting supernatural things betray in almost all, if not all, cases an earlier physical meaning."⁶ This opinion, endorsed by other authorities like Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917) and James George Frazer (1854-1941), is based on data gathered in course of extensive and painstaking scientific researches among primitive tribes in different parts of the world.

The residue of humanness, therefore, is the biological heritage of reason. To put the same thing differently, human nature is not to believe, but to struggle for freedom and search for truth, the

latter aspect manifesting itself in *homo sapiens*. The distinction is fundamental. Belief in supernatural beings or mysterious metaphysical forces would make submission to the object of belief the essence of human nature. If that was the case, man would have never emerged from the state of savagery. Because, as soon as the biological form belonging to the human species became a thinking being, mind and thought entered into the process of organic evolution as its determining factors. Having grown out of the background of the law-governed physical Universe, they are rational categories; therefore, the entire subsequent process of man's intellectual and emotional development is also rational.

Before man's imagination populated nature with gods and hit upon the practice of propitiating them with prayers and sacrifices, the savage believed that he could obtain similar results by magic. "Magic rose before religion in the evolution of our race, and man essayed to bend nature to his wishes by the sheer force of spells and enchantments before he strove to coax and mollify a coy, capricious or irascible deity by the soft insinuation of prayer and sacrifice."⁷ Frazer has shown that there is a close analogy between the magical and the scientific conceptions of the world. Both assume a succession of events according to immutable laws, the operation of which can be foreseen and, therefore, events predicted or anticipated. "It (magic) assumes that in nature one event follows another necessarily and invariably without intervention of any spiritual or personal agency. Thus, its fundamental conception is identical with that of modern science; underlying the whole system is a faith, implicit but real and firm, in the order and uniformity of nature. The magician does not doubt that the same causes will always produce the same effects."⁸ Magic, thus, is antagonistic to faith, even of the natural religion, which allows gods to regulate the operation of natural phenomena according to the wishes of the supplicating man. Yet, there was a time when magic and natural religion were closely associated, proving that the latter was also an expression of rationality inherent in human nature, "a device of human reason".

Both magic and natural religion assumed, one explicitly and the other by implication, that man can have the power to free himself from the domination of the ruthless forces of nature by controlling them either directly through spells and incantations, or indirectly by propitiating the gods who were conceived as enormously

more powerful the men. When experience exposed the limitations of the terrestrial magician's power, the savage looked up to celestial ones—the gods of the natural religion. They were not conceived as superhuman immortal beings; they were parts of nature, being originators and controllers of its various phenomena. They represented the ideal of man—personifications of power and freedom, power as the means to freedom.

Animism is supposed to prove that the primitive man instinctively believes in supernatural forces. The defenders of this view hold that animism was antecedent to magic, being the origin of religion. Their whole argument centres around the term "*anima*" which, they maintain, was conceived by the savage as something immaterial, spiritual. The notion of an immaterial soul, which eventually came to be a cardinal dogma of religion, is said to have originated in animism. The controversy about the priority of animism or magic is anthropologically important; philosophically, it is immaterial. The case of those who hold that it is human nature to believe does not improve even if priority is conceded to animism.

The doctrine of soul, indeed, originated in animism; in that sense, the root of religion may be traced to the philosophy of the savage who believed that all actions and reactions in nature were purposeful. But the *anima* was not something separate from the body; it was a "vaporious materiality", identified with breath. There is abundant philological evidence to that effect. In all the old languages—Hebrew, Sanskrit, Greek, Roman, Slavonic, Arabic—the words for soul or spirit etymologically mean "breath." Now, breath is a property of the body; animism thus placed soul in the body. "It is one thing to regard an object as having anthropological consciousness, and another to believe that consciousness is a distinct power capable of quitting it or of surviving its destruction or of existing independently. The human spirit is not necessarily believed to enter upon a life after death, still less is the spirit of the animal."⁹ The word *anima* means life. The soul of animism clearly was a biological notion. It was not a matter of belief, but result of experience. Savages hold the animistic doctrine of soul "on the very evidence of their senses interpreted on the biological principle which seems to them most reasonable."¹⁰ Tylor, therefore, speaks of the "logic of the savage". On all competent authority, animism was also an expression of the rationality of the

primitive man. The fact that it contained the germ of religion only proves that the latter also is essentially rational.

If the prejudices of animism did not place their sanctions outside nature, natural religion would have been the rational effort of the barbarian to explain the phenomena of nature and his experience thereof. Had the notion of a creator or an almighty God or a cosmic force been current in the dawn of civilisation, then the barbarian would not feel the necessity to search for the cause of such natural phenomena as rain, storm, movements of the stars etc.,—a search which led to his inventing the gods of natural religion. The search was an expression of his innate rationality: everything must have a cause. The gods were conceived as great magicians who could make nature bend before their will, and magicians were men who knew the laws of nature, and that knowledge gave them the power of divination.

Natural religions were theoretical systems "devised by human reason, without supernatural aid or revelation."¹¹ A similar view was held many centuries earlier by Thomas Aquinas. "Some religious truths are attainable by the unaided exercise of human reason (1224-1274), while others required the disclosure of supernatural revelation before they could be known." This doctrine was preached by mediaeval theologians with the object of reconciling Christianity with the natural religion of the pagans. But by, incidentally, it admitted that simple deism was a rational cult as against the mysticism of revealed religion.

Having reached the conclusion that the age of religion was preceded by the age of magic, Frazer takes up the investigation of the cause which induced mankind to turn its mind in another direction, and identifies it with the urge for a true theory of nature and a more fruitful method of turning her resources to account. "Men for the first time recognised their inability to manipulate at pleasure certain natural forces which hitherto they had believed to be completely within their control.... Thus cut adrift from his ancient moorings and left to toss on a troubled sea of doubts and uncertainty, our primitive philosopher must have been sadly perplexed.... If the great world went on its way without the help of him or his fellows, it must surely be because there were other beings, like himself, but far stronger, who, unseen themselves, directed its course and brought about all the varied series of events which he had hitherto believed to be dependent on his own magic."¹²

The still lingering belief that the sense of morality is intimately associated with religion, is not borne out by historical research. The savage, with no notion of God, has a strong sense of good and bad. With him, it is instinctive; that is to say, his sense of morality is not prompted by any inner voice, nor is it dictated by the fear of God. Morality, therefore, is also essentially rational. The fashionable expression—"Law of the Jungle"—only betrays human conceit. There are rules of conduct even among higher animals. Those rules go into the composition of human instincts. They are part of man's biological heritage—the constant of human nature. In man, they express themselves as the sense of morality. One knows from experience what is good for him and what is bad for him. Therefore he generalises what is bad for him is also bad for all. That is the origin of morality.

Modern historical research has revealed that philosophy is older than religion, if superstitions of the savage, such as fetishism, magic and animism, and also the spurious piety of the barbarian, who propitiates the gods of natural religion for selfish motives, are not counted as religion. This fact proves that human nature is essentially rational, because rationalism is the guiding principle of philosophical thought. The earliest Philosophies were the first attempts of human intelligence to explain natural phenomena in physical terms without assuming supernatural agencies causing them. The point of departure of those attempts was the belief that nature was a rational, law-governed, system. That belief was possible because human mind, not yet confused by metaphysical speculations, not lured by religious imaginations, could function in its native posture—in tune with nature. The relation between philosophy and religion, between reason and faith, can be clearly traced in the history of the western world. Science as a free enquiry into nature, and philosophy as a rational plan for attaining the ideal of "good life" developed to a high level in ancient Greece, centuries before the rise of Christianity. Natural religions, which preceded scientific enquiry and philosophical thought, were pseudo-theological systems, also devised by human reason. Their theology was spurious, because the gods of natural religion were made by men, after their own image, and lived in nature.

The ancient history of other countries of old civilisations is still to be reconstructed. But even now there is enough reliable evidence indicating that religion in the strict sense was a later deve-

lopment there also. In India, the Vedic age of natural religion was followed by a period of rational enquiries, fragmentarily recorded in the Upanishads. Out of them rose different systems of philosophy. Hindu religion as expounded in the Vedanta and Gita was a later development. The sequence is not clear, with a good deal of overlapping and many long gaps, because Hinduism is not a revealed religion. In China, there was no religion until Buddhism in a degenerated form came from India. Of the two currents of thought in ancient China, Confucianism was rational and Taoism naturalist.

In the present stage of world history, pending the composition of a universal history, the evolution of thought in the western world has to be taken as the general pattern. More than six hundred years before the rise of Christianity, there developed in Greece an intellectual life which laid the spiritual foundation of modern civilisation. Full of vigour, it survived the onslaught of an organised religion which completely dominated the European mind for more than a thousand years. Ancient Greek thought was rationalist, and consequently the earliest philosophy was materialism. "Long before the rise of the philosophers, a freer and more enlightened conception of the Universe had spread amongst the higher ranks of society."¹³

A galaxy of bold thinkers beginning with Thales gave various explanations of the Universe without going outside nature. Their common point of departure was that "nothing is without a cause." Anaxagoras of Clazomenae (c.500-c.428 B.C.), for instance, spoke of the "world-forming Reason". After more than two-thousand years, that early prophet of rationalism inspired the leaders of the French Revolution, to the extent that ultimately Maximilien Marie Isidore Robespierre (1758-94) made a goddess of reason. Diogenes of Apollonia (5th century B.C.) declared that the world was regulated by reason and identified it with air. Leucippus (5th century B.C.) thought that the "logos" was nothing but the mechanical law which guided the movement of atoms. The ideas of the earlier philosophers were summarised by the founder of physics, Democritus (c.460-c.370 B.C.), who held that the postulate of the absolute necessity of all things was the condition for the study of nature, and also of any rational knowledge of nature. Empedocles regarded rationality as an eternal property of the elements. The founder of the Eleatic school, Xenophanes (c.570-c.480 B.C.), was also a rationalist.

Socrates was not alone to drink the cup of poison. Even Aristotle, who later on became the patron-saint of Christian theology, had to flee from Athens to escape a similar fate. All the works of Protagoras (c.480-c.410 B.C.) were burnt, and he also escaped the wrath of the priesthood of natural religion by fleeing. Anaxagoras was arrested, but managed to run away and save himself. Diogenes, the cynic (c.412-c.323 B.C.) was persecuted as an atheist. Yet, the wisdom of the first philosophers survived not only decayed natural religion, but also the powerful onslaught of Christianity. Christian theology accepting the authority of the atheist Aristotle was a revenge of nature.

Because of a multitude of definitions, or of the absence of rational ones, the concepts of freedom and truth are dismissed by practical men as objects of metaphysical speculation. Yet, the quest for freedom is the incentive which differentiates the human species from its biological background. It is the most basic human urge, though most of the time it remains buried deep under the surface of consciousness. Indeed, the incentive itself is a biological heritage. Of course, in the context of the pre-human process of organic evolution, the incentive for freedom has a physical connotation. It expresses itself in the struggle for existence. To live is to survive the deadly impacts of the forces of nature.¹⁴ To live, organisms must not only free themselves from the stranglehold of inanimate nature, but struggle also against other manifestations of life itself. Therefore, every success in the biological struggle for existence can be called a conquest of freedom.

It seems to be more difficult to trace the highly philosophical and ethical concept of truth in the biological essence of human nature. Is it not a purely metaphysical category? If it were, then, it could have nothing to do with human nature, which is physically determined, biological evolution being a process embedded in the physical Universe. But before the appearance of homo sapiens, the being who could philosophise, populate nature with supernatural beings, imagine a metaphysical cosmic force or will, and conceive of ethical values, it was not all a spiritual void. The psyche is said to be the repository of residues antedating homo sapiens. The psyche, however, is not a mystic entity serving as the link between the mortal man and the immortal world-spirit. It is the subconscious part of the mind—a biological heritage, the storehouse of experiences of the primitive man as well as of his ver-

tebrate animal ancestors. The psyche is not a mystic entity, because, as the subject of the science of psychology, it can be reduced to physico-chemical constituents, with which philosophy can build the bridge across the gulf between physics and psychology. The psyche, in other words, is the umbelical chord which binds man, with all his spiritual attributes, to Mother Nature—the physical world. All metaphysical concepts and ethical values, conceived and created by homo sapiens, are physically determined; the psyche is a daughter of the Mother Earth.

Truth, therefore, is not a metaphysical concept. It is a matter of human experience. It is a matter of fact. Truth is correspondence with objective reality,—the relation between two objects of experience. Therefore, it is the content of knowledge. The old saying, "knowledge is power," is not an empty phrase. It summarises the lesson of the entire human experience. The biological struggle for existence was a blind urge; man's struggle for freedom from the tyranny of the forces of nature was guided by his knowledge of nature. The one became successful in proportion to the increase of the latter. The biological heritage of the quest of freedom created already in the savage the urge for knowledge which gave him power to carry on the struggle against the forces of nature. The search for truth, therefore, is intimately associated with the quest of freedom as the essence of human nature.

NOTES

1. "The foundation of all understanding of sociological theory—that is to say, of all understanding of human life—is that no static maintenance of perfection is possible. This axiom is rooted in the nature of things. Advance or decadence are the only choices offered to mankind..... The very essence of reality, that is, of completely real, is process. Thus, each actual thing is only to be understood in terms of its becoming and perishing. There is no halt in which actuality is just its static self, accidentally played upon by qualifications derived from shift of circumstances. The converse is the truth..... The pure conservative is fighting against the essence of the Universe." (A.N. Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*).
2. J.B.S. Haldane, *Facts and Faith*.
3. James Frazer, *The Golden Bough*.

4. My long and fairly systematic observation of animal behaviour, particularly of cats, warrants disagreement with the view that animals are altogether incapable of what can be called conceptual thought. Rudiments of that human capacity are clearly discernible in them. Their behaviour is often determined by the memory of things not present in their field of vision.
5. John Lubbock, Lord Avebury, *The Origin of Civilisation*.
6. *Ibid.*
7. James Frazer, *The Golden Bough*.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Carveth Read, *Man and His Superstitions*.
10. Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*.
11. Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*.
12. James Frazer, *The Golden Bough*.
13. Lange, *History of Materialism*
14. "The meaning of cultural progress is in a conflict between Eros and Death, between the Life-instinct and the Instinct of Destruction. This conflict is the essential import of life, and cultural progress is consequently to be described as the struggle for the existence of mankind." (Sigmund Freud, *Civilisation and Its Discontents*).

Chapter III

THE LAW-GOVERNED UNIVERSE

It is a very significant fact of the history of philosophy that Christian theology and scholastic learning, as represented by Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magnus (1193-1280), Duns Scotus Erigena (c.810-c.877), William of Ockham (c.1280-c.1349) and others, conceived and developed the pregnant idea of a law-governed Universe,¹ which inspired the pioneers, like Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), Cusa (1401-1464), Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) and Galileo (1564-1642), to lay down the foundation of modern science. Without that idea as its point of departure, no science would be possible. The germs of modern science thus grew in the womb of the dark Middle-Ages, which was dominated by the mysticism of a so-called revealed religion. Reason triumphed over faith in a struggle which lasted for a whole millennium.

But a much more significant fact is that, even during the first thousand years of the Christian era, reason was not altogether overwhelmed by faith. The breakdown of the antique social order created a spiritual chaos. That was a time when Freudian "paranoiacs" sought "to set the world right by means of a fantasy which they proceeded to translate into reality."² A mass fantasy was created by an increasingly large number of "paranoiacs" uniting to bring about a state of happiness by reforming painful and depressing realities in conformity with a delusion. Yet, the rational essence of human nature successfully weathered all those vicissitudes, to reassert itself ultimately as the revolt of man against the Almighty God and his more powerful agents on earth. As a matter of fact, even the mysticism of a revealed religion is but a perverted form of rationalism inherent in human nature. Mysticism does not deny order in nature, but only ascribes it to the inscrutable will of God: It is too grand a scheme to be comprehended by human intelligence.

"The technique of religion consists in lowering the values of life and distorting the image of the real world in a fantastic way; and this presupposes the intimidation of the intelligence. By the forceful fixation of a psychic infantilism and its incorporation into a mass fantasy, religions succeed in saving many people from an individual neurosis."³ So, mystic religious belief is only a consolation for the tormented soul tossing in the stormy sea of uncertainty. That is a temporary predicament. The origin and history of religion are psychological problems; they are inherent in the evolution of the human mind. All attempts to solve these problems must begin not with gratuitous assumptions, such as "it is human nature to believe", but with obvious and elementary questions.

"Why did human beings ever come to hold these opinions at all, and how did they arrive at them? What was there in the condition of early man which made him frame to himself such abstract notions or one of more great supernatural agents of whose objective existence he had certainly in nature no clear and obvious evidence? What first suggested to the mind of man the notion of deity in the abstract? And, how from the early multiplicity of deities did the conception of a single great and unlimited deity first take its rise? Why did men ever believe there were gods at all; and why from many gods did they arrive at one?"⁴

Answers to these pertinent questions are to be found in a philosophical examination of the intellectual development of the human race. The enquiry leads to the conclusion that religion was the refuge of frustrated rationalism of the savage. In the absence of positive knowledge, and owing to the impossibility of gaining it under the circumstances of the age, the attempts of the great ancient thinkers—those forerunners of science and philosophy—to explain nature rationally, were bound to be speculative. Only a few could rise to the dizzy heights of speculative thought, as distinct from "the fantasy of paranoiacs". But natural religion could not permanently satisfy the curiosity of mankind at the dawn of civilisation. Adolescent human intelligence, generally, required something less infantile and more convincing. "Religion is the outcome of an effort to explain all things—physical, metaphysical and moral—by analogies drawn from human society, imaginatively and symbolically considered. In short, it is a universal sociological hypothesis, mystical in form."⁵

More correctly, it is an intellectual hypothesis. Instinctively

believing that everything is caused, man must imagine causes of the objects of his experience, if he cannot discover them ; and the imaginary causes of the diverse phenomena must eventually be traced to a final cause. Summarising the findings of " modern science of the history of religion", a discerning author of great competence writes: "The ideas of God and of the soul are the result of early fallacious reasonings about misunderstood experience."⁶

The logical view of the origin and evolution of religious thought is corroborated by the various definitions of religion given by recognised authorities on the subject. All those definitions can be classified under two heads: " intellectual" and "affective". Herbert Spencer's definition—"religion is the recognition of a mystery pressing for interpretation"—is the most representative of the former category. "Mystery" and "interpretation" are the key words. Ever since the dawn of civilisation, man has been trying to interpret the mysteries of nature. The effort presupposes that the mysteries can be interpreted. Instinctive rationalism is the basis of that assumption. So defined, religion differs essentially little from science, which also proposes to explain the mysteries of nature. Only, for science, mysteries are as yet unknown relations and functions of nature, which are still to be discovered, known and explained. Explanation can be hypothetical as well as empirical; religious interpretation of the mysteries of nature, however, is imaginary. The gods of the natural religion or the Supreme Being of monotheism are analogous to the hypothesis of science. Thus conceived, religion is a backward stage of science—of the human quest for knowledge and truth. Essentially, it is a rational system of thought, limited by the inadequate store of positive knowledge. When the available store of knowledge is not sufficient for setting up theoretically verifiable working hypotheses, the human spirit thirsting for knowledge necessarily falls back on imagination. The result is religion.

This view of religion is further developed by other competent investigators in the field. For instance, Auguste Sabatier (1839-1901) came to the conclusion that religion "is a commerce, a conscious and willed relation, into which the soul in distress enters with the mysterious powers on which it feels that its destiny depends."⁷ This is a corroboration of the view suggested above that religion is frustrated rationalism of the savage. The unknown relations and functions of nature are declared to be beyond that reach of human

intelligence; they are determined by imaginary powers, who or which are not essentially different from man, because the latter can enter into relation with them. All the processes of nature, which envelop human existence, are determined; but man does not know how; therefore, he must depend on powers which are supposed to run the mechanism of the world. Freud's picture of religious mentality brings out the salient point of Sabatier's conclusion.

Anthropology is concerned with the primitive state of the race. Frazer's definition of religion, nevertheless, has a general application. He defines religion as the "propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man, which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and human life."⁸ The gods of natural religion were propitiated by sacrifice; prayer in higher forms of religion serves the same purpose. The point of the definition is that the basic assumption of religious thought, whether polytheistic or monotheistic, is that nature is a law-governed system, the laws may be given by superior powers, but, in as much as they govern human life, and direct the course of nature, in the context of which human life is lived, they can be discovered. Therefore, Max Muller defined religion as "a department of thought". Belief and thought are not identical functions of the human brain. Thinking is a rational process.

Turning to the affective definitions of religion, one must accept Friedrich Ernst Daniel Schleiermacher's (1768-1834) definition as the most representative: "Religion is a feeling of absolute dependence upon God." The similarity with Sabatier's "intellectual" definition is evident. How did the feeling develop? And how was the idea of an Almighty God conceived? The conception of an idea is again a rational process. The starting point of the evolution of the idea of God was the instinctive urge to discover the causes of natural phenomena; eventually, the various superhuman agencies controlling the diverse phenomena of nature were traced to one supreme power. The metaphysical concept of a Final Cause is also a rational notion. Because, it excludes miracles, something coming out of nothing, which are the characteristic features of religious belief. The feeling of absolute dependence results from the experience that man cannot influence the processes of nature, which go in their own way, presumably according to their own laws. In that state of helplessness, man imagines a Supreme Being as the Creator and the ruler of the world. Having thus imagined

the Final Cause, either anthropomorphically or mystically, man subordinates himself to its effects. He does not surrender to an esoteric faith, but to his innate rationalism.

There is a significant corollary to Schleiermacher's definition of religion: "The religious sentiment is no doubt a feeling of dependence. But the feeling of dependence, really to give birth to religion, must provoke in one a reaction—a desire for deliverance."⁹ Significantly enough, this implication of Schleiermacher's definition is pointed out by an agnostic historian of religion. The feeling of dependence is not coincident with religion; it precedes religion and gives birth to it. The feeling that the microcosm (man) is dependent on the imperious laws of the macrocosm (the physical Universe) is a secular feeling—a thoroughly rationalist view. That is the relation between religion and science, and it is a causal relation. Increasing knowledge of the relations and functions of nature progressively makes the feeling less poignant. In the absence of that knowledge, the feeling of dependence, born of experience, gets hold of the mind of man. He escapes the nemesis of the death instinct by completely surrendering himself to a saviour of his own imagination.

The most significant point of the corollary to Schleiermacher's fideist rationalism is that absolute dependence on God represents the urge for freedom. Man wants to know nature, because knowledge will give him the power to be free from her tyranny. Having failed to attain that secular objective, man of the pre-scientific era surrenders to an Almighty God, hoping for deliverance with his help or by his grace. Religion thus, after all, is an expression of man's struggle against nature. There is nothing supernatural in it.

Finally, we have the affective definition of William James (1842-1910): "One might say that religious life consists in the belief that there is an unseen order, and that our supreme good lies in harmoniously adjusting ourselves thereto."¹⁰ So, even the arch-irrationalist of our time admits that religious thought is essentially rational; the world is not enveloped in an inscrutable mystery; that there is an order. Order is a rational concept, and as such accessible to human intelligence. The point, however, is that even the most extravagant mysticism, if it tries to appeal to the reason of man, cannot get away from the idea that the world is a law-governed system, and human life, being a part of the world, is governed by reason. In other words, religion cannot get away from

biology. Therefore, Christianity was bound to outgrow its original mysticism and culminate in a rationalist theology, which inspired the rise of modern science. The grand idea of a law-governed Universe is inherent in religious thought, and in course of time crystallises itself as the solvent of all religions. There is the dialectics of the dynamics of ideas.

In the nineteenth century, criticism of religion and religious philosophy was involved in a sterile controversy between "intellectualism" and "voluntarism". The controversy was sterile because it raised psychological problems which could not be solved in the atmosphere of the inadequate biological knowledge of the time. Philosophically also, the controversy was idle. Aristotle knew that there was no fundamental difference between intelligence and will. He described man as a "thinking desire". The urge underlying religious sentiment is not surrender, but desire. The surrender to God is motivated by the desire for deliverance. The relation between intelligence and will was recognised by some metaphysicians of the nineteenth century. "Will is not merely a function which sometimes accures to consciousness, and is sometimes lacking: it is an integral part of consciousness."¹¹ Will is not an irrational impulse; the religious sentiment of absolute surrender to God is, in the last analysis, an intelligent act—an act committed with a purpose, believing that it will produce the desired result.

With the rise of monotheistic religions, man begins to come out of the spiritual wilderness of mysticism; theology becomes a logical system in order to rationalise anthropomorphic monotheism. On the other hand, monotheism itself is a rational concept. Primitive rationalism of the savage, the instinctive belief that every event is caused by some unseen power, populated the landscape with the numerous gods of natural religion. Monotheism followed as a corollary to that primitive rationalist view: The gods of natural religion, in their turn, must be traced to some cause. The search for the causes of the phenomena of nature ended in the notion of an Almighty Creator of the world. It is inherent in the logic of religious thought that the idea of one God, the supreme architect of the world, should follow from polytheism.

When the God of gods is a matter of logical deduction, he can be conceived as the "Universal Reason", as was actually done by the heralds of Christian monotheism, such as Socrates and Plato. After them the idea of a Supreme God developed in the meta-

physics of Aristotle and the Pantheism of the Stoics; both were antagonistic to the faith in a Creator. The Christian conception of God was anthropomorphic. The absurdity and naivety of the conception, therefore, was shrouded in mysticism, revelation being a mystic cult. Otherwise, straight-forward, unabashed, anthropomorphic monotheism opens up the floodgates of rationalism. Islamic monotheism, the most rigid and naivest form of the creed, had that consequence. Christian theology, though based upon the rational idea of a Supreme Being, conceived as the "Universal Reason", could defy reason so long as its monotheism remained confused by the trinitarian dogma. The confusion was not cleared until Arabic thought penetrated Europe to influence scholastic learning. As soon as Christian theology outgrew mysticism and became consistently monotheistic, it heralded the rise of modern science by proclaiming that the Universe was a law-governed system. The continuity of human thought, as the red thread running through the entire history of the human race, is remarkable.

The state of savagery is the intellectual infancy of man. In that state, primitive rationality takes the form of the belief in the volition of invisible supreme powers behind the diverse phenomena of nature. In course of time, experience reinforces reason, and man attains intellectual adolescence. The discovery that events in his immediate environments and of direct experience, such as the fall of stones, flow of water, rustling of leaves, movement of shadows, so on and so forth, are due to physical causes, enables man to outgrow the animistic belief of the savage. The religion of the primitive man progressively discards the infantile faith in the arbitrary volition of invisible powers, and moves towards the doctrine of law, conceived as the providence. The intellectual development is towards monotheism—the notion of an Almighty Being ruling the world according to reason or law. In the last analysis, monotheistic religion is also a result of the rationality of man.

Monotheism, however, did not grow directly out of the background of the polytheistic natural religion. Metaphysical and moral thoughts, which followed the unsuccessful attempts of early science and philosophy, went into the making of the monotheistic religions, particularly, Christianity. Therefore, even during the dark Middle-Ages, reason could not be altogether suffocated by blind faith; and eventually, it reasserted itself in the scholastic learning of great Christian theologians who heralded the Renaissance of

science and philosophy. The early fathers of the Christian Church took pride in pointing out the agreement between their doctrines and the principles of Greek philosophy. They asserted that faith and reason were not mutually exclusive. Many centuries later, scholasticism developed that doctrine into the notion of a law-governed Universe.

The failure of ancient naturalist speculations gave rise to doubt about the possibility of positive knowledge. On the one hand, the belief in the gods of natural religion had been shaken by the bold speculations of the early philosophers, and on the other hand, in that atmosphere of intellectual unsettlement and scepticism, the attention of the thinking man was turned towards the problems of human life, which were in the reach of direct observation. The intellectual life of Greece, at that time, was dominated by the "wise men" known in history as the Sophists. The founder of that school, Protagoras, enunciated the dictum: "Man is the measure of things", which came to be the guiding principle of Humanism throughout the subsequent ages. Sophist rationalism exposed the fallacies and absurdities of traditional beliefs, and compelled all thinking men to probe deeply into the problems of human life. Socrates was a keen student of the Sophists; but he was also a pious Athenian. Yet, he incurred the wrath of the priesthood and put on the martyr's crown of thorns, because he laid the foundation of a monotheistic theology. Above all, he was a rationalist. The terms "God" and "Reason" were used by him interchangeably. He differed from the Ionian naturalists in that he deduced laws inductively, starting from man and his experience, he restated the humanist doctrine of Protagoras as follows: "The world is explained from man, not man from the universal laws of nature." He taught that the universal Reason which had created the world could be conceived only on the pattern of human reason. Anthropomorphic monotheism was only a step from the rationalist Humanism of Socrates. Indeed, he actually postulated "an architect of the world", and then proceeded to rationalise the concept. At that point, the threads of his thoughts were taken up by Plato, who elaborated the fundamental doctrines of Christian theology several hundred years before Christ. Early Christianity, thus, was not the ideology of slave revolt; nor later on, of Roman Imperialism. It resulted from the setback which Greek science and philosophy suffered in the intellectual atmosphere of the ancient world, which set a limit to the

possibility of acquiring positive knowledge.

Plato developed the moral philosophy of Socrates, and found in the notion of one God a sanction for it. Placing reason above the world of sense perceptions, Plato, however, departed from the position of Socratic rationalism. Platonic Reason came to be a mystic conception; as such, it went into the making of the teleological view of the Universe, which was taken over by Christian theology. Nevertheless, Plato conceptually pictured the Universe as an interconnected system, mechanistic as well as teleological. Ideas represented the eternal laws of nature. Plato identified God with cosmic intelligence, which was co-existent with matter, but not antecedent to it. Clearly, all these doctrines, couched in a mystic terminology, can be fitted into a materialist philosophy. Yet, they constituted the philosophical foundation of Christian theology.

From the proof of "intelligence and design", presented by all natural objects, Plato inferred a teleological view of the Univers. "All in the world is for the sake of the rest, and the places of the single parts are so ordered as to subserve to the preservation and excellency of the whole; hence, all things are derived from the operation of a divine intellectual cause."¹² That is a conceptual picture of the world as a law-governed system. Teleology is rationalism with the gratuitous notion of a Final Cause tacked on to it.

Although Platonic teleology became more articulated in Aristotle's doctrine of "Form and Matter", the latter was the founder of the exact sciences: as such, he rejected the master's mysticism, and attached greater importance to the rational trends of Platonic thought. Early Christianity was influenced by Plato's mysticism; but eventually, breaking away from oriental cults, it required a rationalist theology to triumph as a monotheistic religion. At that period of its history, Aristotle's logic and metaphysics became the foundation of Christian theology. His metaphysics, with its doctrine of the fourfold cause, made a religious philosophy possible. Conceiving the Supreme Being as the absolute substance, Aristotle put God in matter. Faith was thus reconciled with a rationalist view of the Universe. Quite inconsistently with his view that experience was the source of all knowledge, Aristotle asserted that the First Principle of the Final Cause was accessible through experience. Beginning empirically, his system degenerated into dogmatic speculations, which went into the making of the religious philosophy of the early Middle-Ages. His physics became meta-

physics. In the absence of the material possibility of acquiring an exact knowledge of things and their inter-relations empirically, forms (ideas) became the subject matter of investigation, the instrument of which was logic. Under such intellectual conditions, philosophy was bound to degenerate into wild speculations which fostered scepticism in healthy minds. In that intellectual chaos, the average man's mind was fascinated by the new faith heralded by the sage of antiquity. To overcome scepticism, speculative philosophy prepared the way to a higher form of religion—Christian monotheism. Aristotle's rationalism laid the foundation of Christian theology, which was the result of a misapplied and perverted rationalism. With Plato, the idea of God was an *ad hoc* assumption, a product of poetic imagination; actually, a postulate. Aristotle placed God on an empirical background. He rationalised the idea of God.

The intellectual life of antique society was overtaken by a spiritual crisis. Socrates set up his moral philosophy to stop the rot. But having no authoritative sanction, Socratic ethics could not stem the tide of scepticism. The relativist ethics of the Sophists had a greater attraction. Plato sought to supply a supernatural sanction to the moral philosophy of Socrates. But his "ideas" were too misty to carry any conviction with the sceptics. Aristotle's Final Cause served the purpose of stabilising the spiritual life by giving it a new orientation—a rationalised theology for a monotheistic religion. Aristotle derived morality from an immutable First Principle—of Goodness and Truth, that is, from God. The Stoics took over Aristotle's ethics, but rejected the speculative elements of his as well as Plato's philosophy. Early Christianity was a combination of Hebrew monotheism and Stoic ethics.

The Stoics combatted scepticism with the following argument: Everything unreasonable is dangerous. The pleasures and pains of the body are to be disregarded; only the pleasure and pain of the intellect are the concerns of man. By his passion, man is made a slave; his reason makes him free. It is his duty to overcome the senses and despise passions. Thus, man becomes free and virtuous.

Early Christianity spread as the revolt of man against Roman despotism. It rose to satisfy an intellectual need and moral craving of the time. A common misfortune had overtaken the people of the Roman world. Their faith in the gods of natural religion was undermined by the fact that they could do nothing to help their

devotees. In the absence of any faith, demoralisation spread far and wide. In that depressing atmosphere, Christianity rose to declare the equality of all men before God. It was naturally hailed throughout the Roman world, and very soon penetrated every department of public life. Therefore, persecution failed; and Emperor Constantine the great (c.274/280-337) embraced the new faith. Early Christianity was frankly contemptuous of learning, science and philosophy. But before long, it came under Platonic and Stoic influence. In the Patristic literature, mysticism mingled with Hellenic Rationalism. Some of the early Church Fathers, notably Augustin of Hippo (354-430), had been learned pagans before they became believing Christians. Nevertheless, in course of time, the Trinitarian controversy, the dispute over the mystic cult of trans-substantiation, overwhelmed the rationalism of Platonic theology adopted by the early Christian Fathers. That setback was due to the fact that during that period Christianity compromised its monotheism in order to establish itself firmly in a pagan world.

The dark ages, however, did not last as long as is generally believed even to-day. The inroads of the barbarians from the North, and, two-hundred years later, the rise and dramatic spread of the Islamic power, dealt a staggering blow to the religion of miracle-mongering, idolatry and relic-worship to which Christianity had degenerated after the two centuries of Apostolic and Evangelist purity. No miracle happened to save Rome from the heathen invaders from the North; nor could the saints arrest the spectacular spread of Islam as far as the Atlantic coast. The necessity of purifying Christianity was felt by the more intelligent and learned inhabitants of the Roman world.

Early in the eighth century, the iconoclastic Emperor Leo the Isaurian (c.680-741) ascended the throne of Constantinople. His edicts prohibiting image worship marked the beginning of the efforts to purify Christianity and make a truly monotheistic religion out of it. That was the commencement of the Byzantine theology with its doctrine of twofold truth—one to be attained by faith, and the other by reason. The exploits of the Khaliphs must have convinced Emperor Leo that monotheism was a much more powerful religion; and it is reported that he also acted under the influence of two Jewish advisers. He was denounced by the orthodox as a Mohammedan and a Jew. That fact proved that the Byzantine theology resulted from the influences of the two monotheistic

religions—Judaism and Islam. The monks opposed Leo's iconoclasm, which was carried on by six successive Emperors over a period of hundred and twenty-five years. The monks were successful in their revolt against the reform, because they could sway the people steeped in ignorance and therefore given to superstitious beliefs.

Iconoclasm was defeated in the East, but it triumphed in the West. There, the vulgarisation of Christianity outraged religious men. During the dark ages the monasteries had become the refuge of learning in the West. When the Arabs established themselves in Spain, ancient Greek philosophy, particularly the works of Aristotle, penetrated Western Europe to inspire scholastic learning and a rationalist theology. The twelfth century saw Western Europe pulsating with a new intellectual life. Ancient Greek philosophy and the Alexandrian science had penetrated Europe through the universities founded in Spain by the Arab conquerors. In the seclusion of the monasteries, many a profoundly pious man of great learning was considering the crucial question whether or not the absurd dogmas of Christianity should not be thrown into the crucible of reason. Not a few Church dignitaries themselves felt the urge to put religion to the test of reason. So potential and widespread was the resurgence of reason and philosophy that Rome was alarmed. Before long, Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand—c.1023-85—thought that it was wise to take the rising scholastic learning under Apostolic patronage. One of the founders of scholasticism, Gerbert, rose to the papal throne with the name of Sylvester II (c.945-1003). He was a pupil of the Arabs, having gone to study at Cordova.

As a matter of fact, Western Europe felt the impact of resurgent rationalism even earlier than the twelfth century. Already in the ninth century, the German monk Gottschalk (c.805-869) questioned the venerable dogma of predestination. A revolt of reason against authority was evidently involved in that controversy. John Scotus Erigena also lived at that time. He proposed to combine philosophy with religion, and made a pilgrimage to the birthplace of Plato and Aristotle. Holding that matter was also eternal, co-existent with God, Erigena argued: "Reason is first in nature, and authority in time. For, although nature was created together with time, authority did not begin to exist from the beginning of nature and time. But reason has arisen with nature and time, from the

beginning of things. Reason itself teaches this. For, authority, no doubt, hath proceeded from reason, but reason not by any means from authority. And all authority which is not approved by true reason, turns out to be weak. But true reason, seeing that it stands firm and immutable, protected by its own virtues, does not need to be strengthened by any confirmation of authority."¹³

The Trinitarian doctrine, established by the First Council of Nicea (325) which formulated that mystic cult of trans-substantiation, had prevented Christianity from developing as a purely monotheistic religion. With that dogma challenged, Christianity outgrew the handicap of mysticism. The history of thought had reached a point where mystic religion must join issue with reason. The orthodox ecclesiasts, particularly of Italy, made a desperate attempt to curb the growth of rationalism. In order to rationalise faith, they took over Erigena's philosophy, mixed it up with Aristotle's metaphysics, and Stoic pantheism, and conferred on the strange concoction the blessings of the Holy Scriptures. That was the rise of scholastic theology. But the subterfuge did not work. The doubt about orthodox religious ideas had spread too far and wide to be so easily silenced. There was a growing demand for orderly thought. The new method of drawing a distinction between faith and reason was fascinating. It allowed a considerable margin for rational thought, which thus grew under the stepmotherly patronage of the Church, and particularly in the seclusion of the monasteries.

"The awakening mind of the West was displaying, in an unmistakable way, its propensity to advance. It became impossible to divert the onward movement, and on the first great question arising—that of the figure and place of the earth—a question dangerous to the last degree, since it inferentially included the determination of the position of man in the Universe, theology suffered an irretrievable defeat. Between her and philosophy, there was thenceforth no other issue than a mortal duel."¹⁴

From the eleventh century, the University of Paris became the seat of scholastic learning. The historic duel between faith and reason was now fought as the "Realist" and "Nominalist" controversy. Erigena's philosophy was developed by a series of bold thinkers, Roscellinus (c.1050-1125) and Peter Abelard (1079-1142) being the most prominent. The early Church Fathers had taken over the Platonic doctrine of the "Universals" to give their oriental mysticism a philosophical appearance. Roscellinus was the first

to challenge the reality of the "Universals", characterising them as mere names. He invoked the authority of Aristotle, who had refuted the Platonic doctrine. Orthodox Ecclesiasts were placed in a very awkward position. Because, they had also relied on Aristotle's authority. Roscellinus boldly declared that the Trinity of Christian theology was incompatible with the unity of real existence. He was accused of heresy and died as a martyr to the cause of freedom and progress.

But the spiritual upsurge was irresistible, and orthodoxy had to give in ground, though inch by inch. It received support from the most unexpected quarter. In his effort to combat the heresy of the "Nominalists" of the University of Paris, the canonised Archbishop of Canterbury, Anselm (c.1033-1109), fell back on the double-edged sword of Byzantine logic (of twofold truth) and "consecrated the privilege of reason by showing the harmony between reason and faith."¹⁵ He, of course, conceded to reason only a secondary place, arguing that, to harmonise, two things did not need to be of equal status. But he did admit that all questions about the relation between faith and reason should be submitted to human intellect. The result of all such well-meaning or wilful efforts was to fan the flame of resurgent rationalism. Still for several centuries, it remained more or less under the tutelage of faith, (scholastic philosophy was religious philosophy); but at the same time, it undermined the authority of revealed religion, and blazed the trail of spiritual freedom.

Abelard's famous book, *Sic Et Non*, could be called the Bible of "Nominalism". It stated, though in a circumscribed manner and through suggestions, the basic doctrine of scholastic philosophy. By the ingenious method of pointing out the contradictory opinions of the Church Fathers, Abelard proved that their doctrines were full of fallacies, and therefore could not stand the test of reason and intelligence. He insinuated that there was so much discord and strife on doctrinal matters, because they referred to imaginary things, and everybody imagined them in his own way. In an earlier work, Abelard discussed the doctrines of faith and mysteries of religion without any restraint; nothing was too profound or too secret for his penetrating criticism. He was condemned by the Church not so much for his denial of the Trinity, as for his assertion of the supremacy of reason, which clearly represented a revolt against authority. As against his appeal to Rome, the lower eccles-

siastical court, which had condemned him, argued: "He makes void the whole Christian faith by attempting to comprehend the nature of God through human reason; he ascends up into heaven; he goes down into hell. Nothing can elude him, either in the height above or in the nethermost depths; his branches spread over the whole earth. He boasts that he has disciples in Rome itself, even in the College of Cardinals. He draws the whole earth after him. It is time, therefore, to silence him by apostolic authority."¹⁶ Abelard escaped the fate of being a martyr by fleeing to the Islamic kingdom of Spain.

"Nominalism" preached by Roscellinus as early as the close of the eleventh century, was more profound than just the opinion of a schoolman. It was the light of philosophy breaking through the darkness of the Middle Ages; it was scepticism asserting itself against superstition and human authority, which dominated the mediaeval mind, it was an onslaught on the hierarchy of the Church as well as of the intellectual world of mystic theology. The birthplace of "Nominalism", the University of Paris, gave birth also to such disruptive doctrines: "There have been many truths from eternity, which were not God himself."¹⁷ When held up as the author of the doctrine, Jean de Brescain a teacher in the University, argued that the doctrine was true, "only philosophically, not theologically". This subtle argument only provoked such outbursts as "the Christian religion prevents us from learning anything more" (than theology); "the only wise men in the world are the philosophers"; "the teachings of the theologians are based upon fables."¹⁸

The Arab Philosophers are to be thanked for quickening the intellectual resurgence in Western Europe. While Christian theology had taken over Platonic mysticism with some fragments of Aristotle's logic and metaphysics, the entire volume of the philosophical and scientific thought of ancient Greece was rescued by the Arabs from the ruins of the antique world; it was treasured and elaborated by a brilliant galaxy of their philosophers. The severe monotheism of Islam made that grand achievement possible. The Almighty God of a monotheistic religion creates the world out of nothing; thereafter, He leaves it alone to go its own way, interfering with secular affairs, He would come under the purview of the laws of the world, and thus compromise His position. The Hindu doctrine of karma could have a similar implication; but Hinduism never became a monotheistic religion. Therefore, Hindu reli-

gious doctrines, since the fall of Buddhism, remained entangled in the wilderness of mysticism, and never promoted rationalist thought and secular learning.

Scholastic rationalism developed on the authority of the scientific works of Aristotle. To what a great extent the Arab philosophers contributed to that intellectual movement, can be judged from the well-known saying current in those days: "Nature interpreted by Aristotle, and Aristotle interpreted by Averroes (1126-98)"—the greatest of Arab philosophers. In Averroism culminated the contest between faith and reason, despotic ignorance and free thought—a contest which had begun in the ninth century, when Erigena counterposed philosophy to theology. Averroes had been preceded by a succession of great thinkers equally bold and brilliant. Only one or two instances may be cited by way of illustration. Al Gazali (c.1058-1111) was an older contemporary of Averroes. He had acquired scepticism from the ancient Greeks, and, having failed to derive satisfaction from religion, he "finally resolved to discard all authority". He declared: "My aim is simply to know the truth of things; consequently, it is indispensable for me to ascertain what is knowledge. Now it was evident to me that certain knowledge must be that which explains the object to be known in such a manner that no doubt can remain, so that in future all error and conjecture respecting it must be impossible. Thus, when I have acknowledged ten to be more than three, if anyone were to say 'on the contrary, three is more than ten, and to prove the truth of my assertion, I will change this rod into a serpent'; and if he were to change it, my conviction of his error would remain unshaken. His manoeuvre would only produce in me admiration for his ability. I should not doubt my own knowledge."¹⁹ Al Gazali arrived at the conclusion that no knowledge could possess such mathematical exactness unless it were acquired by sense perception. In reason he found the judge of the correctness of the sense perceptions.

Abubaker of Andalusia rejected the geocentric view of Ptolemy three-hundred years before Copernicus. It is recorded that he had worked out "an astronomical system and principle of celestial motions; that in his system all movements were verified; and that no error resulted." A treatise elaborating Abubaker's astronomical theories was written after his death by his pupil Alpetragius. That book prepared the way for the revolutionary discovery

of Copernicus. Abubaker's hypothesis was recognised as an immense contribution to astronomical research, and scholastic scientists, like Albertus Magnus (c.1193-1280) and Roger Bacon (1214-1294), belonging to different schools, equally relied upon the work of Alpetragius.

Not only in science and philosophy, but, in religious thought also Europe was influenced by the impact of Arab learning. Owing to the intermingling of a variety of national cultures—Jewish, Assyrian, Persian, Roman, Egyptian, and Indian Greek—the Muslim world, during the earlier centuries of its history, breathed the spirit of cosmopolitanism. So long as peoples live apart, they regard each other's religions as a mass of absurdities. Closer contact breaks down the wall of ignorance, and mutual understanding and respect becomes possible. It stands to the credit of the Arab philosophers that they, for the first time, conceived the idea of a common divine origin of religions as well as that of a law-governed Universe. Having learned from the Assyrians, Egyptians and Greeks, Arab scientists assiduously cultivated astronomy for centuries. The study of the celestial mechanism logically suggested the idea that the world was a cosmos. That grand idea was not repugnant to a rigidly monotheistic religion with an anthropomorphic God who, by his very nature, could not pervade the whole world so as to interfere with its life whimsically at any time, anywhere and in any manner. A personal God can, according to temperament, only watch or contemplate his creation, the inhabitants of the world come under his jurisdiction only on the Day of Judgment. Until then, they are free—as free as mortals ever can be.

With a cosmopolitan spirit and the advantage of the most rigorous monotheism, the Arab philosophers made the bold suggestion that all religions represented efforts of the human mind to solve the mysteries of life and nature. They added that the efforts more reconcilable to reason were the greater, nobler and more sublime.

By the twelfth century, there commenced the process of a radical change in the conception of the world. The belief in supernatural agencies began to be shaken by an ever increasing knowledge of nature, and knowledge of nature revealed that it was a law-governed system. The ancient belief in the possibility of science was restored. European intelligence and learning took up the threads of enquiry into the mechanism of nature, broken

off on the fall of Alexandria (389 A.D.) under the blow of Christian bigotry. Dogmatism was challenged by doubts; venerable articles of faith were questioned by reason and intelligence. The Divine Will operating arbitrarily, defying all attempts of explanation or understanding, began to be replaced by invariable laws of nature. Under the impact of knowledge and learning, radiating from the Islamic world, particularly, the Universities of Spain, and also impelled by the curiosity and intellectual urge of resurgent Europe, theology rationalised itself, and thus became the solvent of religion. The 'theological doctrine of a Providential Will legalised, so to say, the notion of natural laws, and thus made the basic contribution to the resurgence of scientific enquiries. By substituting the anthropomorphic God with the intellectual concept of an impersonal Supreme Being or First Principle or Final Cause, scholastic philosophy tacitly identified the laws of nature with the Providential Will. The former could be deduced from observed facts, and verified experimentally; whereas the latter was no more than a postulate. Consequently, human intelligence became more attracted to the study of natural laws.

History has honoured Roger Bacon, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus Erigena, Albertus Magnus, Peter Abelard and William of Ockham, as the prophets of the spiritual liberation of Europe from the tortuous experience of the dark Middle-Ages. Bacon was the first to grasp clearly that philosophy should be identified with science, and based upon the increasing knowledge of the invariable and universal laws of nature. Thomas Aquinas, who was canonised by the Church, was a metaphysician of the Aristotelian school. He pressed teleology as against theology. He preached the doctrine that God had granted nature a certain measure of autonomy; in other words, nature had laws of her own, which operated independently of any supernatural interference. Therefore, together with Albertus Magnus, he advocated that philosophy and the knowledge of nature should no longer be under the tutelage of religion. As against Augustin, the most illustrious of the early Church Fathers, who had held that knowledge was the result of divine illumination, Aquinas referred knowledge to sense perceptions. John Scotus Erigena shocked the world of his time by boldly posing the tendentious question—"Can matter think?" Albertus Magnus, the prince among the scholastic philosophers, demonstrated the operation of natural laws, and therefore was denounced

by the Church and feared by the ignorant people as a sorcerer and magician. He drew a clear line of demarcation between natural knowledge and theological knowledge. Finally, Ockham was an out-and-out free thinker. With little ambiguity, he separated questions of philosophy from the questions of faith, and strenly kept the latter away from interfering with reason. He even went further to express doubt about the theological view of the Universe. He declared: "In the question of divine intelligence, being the first efficient cause of all that exists, as a philosopher, I know nothing about it, experience not instructing us in what way the cause of causes operates, and reason having neither the power nor the right to penetrate the divine sanctuary."

The idea that the world was not a standing miracle, but a law-governed system thus resulted from the rationalist Christian theology and scholastic learning. The concept of law at that time was largely theological: it was conceived as the operation of the Will of God. But reason having reasserted itself, the operation of the divine laws of nature was no longer a matter of blind faith. Growing curiosity to understand how the laws of nature operated, was indeed still frowned upon by religion; but it could no longer be altogether suppressed. That curiosity promoted the rise of modern science.

The thousand years from Constantin to Columbus were not an intellectual void. The intellectual resurgence at the close of the Middle-Ages cannot be directly connected with the rise of the bourgeoisie. Its root can be traced, as has been done in outlines in this chapter, through the movement of ideas taking place long before the appearance of the bourgeoisie to struggle against the Lords, temporal and spiritual, who amongst themselves dominated the economic life of Europe. The economic life of Europe was stagnant; but the movement of ideas was not suspended. On the contrary, the spread of Christianity was a powerful movement of ideas, which brought the barbarian hordes within the orbit of the coming civilisation. The rise and radiation of Islam also took place during that period of economic stagnation. Yet, human history records no greater dramatic adventure of ideas. Padua was situated near Venice; but Paris was the capital of a barbarian feudal kingdom. And the subversive doctrines radiated from there. Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), Copernicus (1473-1543), Galileo (1564-1642), Kepler (1571-1630) and even Descartes (1596-1650) were all born and

brought up in the atmosphere of rationalist Christian theology, which conceived, albeit theologically, the grand idea of a law-governed Universe. Their relation with Euclid (c.300 B.C.), Archimedes (287-212 B.C.), Hipparchus (2nd century B.C.), Aristarchus of Samothrace (c.214-c.145 B.C.) and other scientists of Alexandria, who lived a thousand or more years previously, can be more convincingly proved than Vasco-da-Gama's circumnavigation of the world, Columbus' discovery of the New World, or the opening of trade routes to the East. There is no causal connection between the rise of modern science and philosophy and the rise of the bourgeoisie. Science and philosophy developed as the result of man's age-long quest for freedom and search for truth. The bourgeoisie, later on, patronised them because they served their purpose. The relation was accidental, not causal.

NOTES

1. Theology is the application of reason to religious beliefs and an attempt to state them in a systematic manner.
2. Sigmund Freud, *Civilisation and its Discontents*.
3. Freud, *Ibid*.
4. Grant Allen, *The Evolution of the Idea of God*.
5. M. Guyau, *The Non-Religion of the Future*.
6. Andrew Lang, *The Making of Religion*.
7. A. Sabatier, *Outline of a Philosophy of Religion*.
8. James Frazer, *The Golden Bough*.
9. Guyau, *The Non-Religion of the Future*.
10. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*.
11. Wundt, *Ethics*.
12. Draper, *The Intellectual Development of Europe*.
13. Maurice, *Mediaeval Philosophy*.
14. Draper, *Intellectual Development of Europe*.
15. Lewes, *History of Philosophy*.
16. Draper, *Intellectual Development of Europe*.
17. Lewes, *History of Philosophy*.
18. Maywald, *Die Lehre von Zweifacher Wahrheit, Ein Versuch der Trennung von Theologie und Philosophy im Mittel-alter*.
19. Quoted by Lewes in *History of Philosophy*.

Chapter IV

THE REVOLT OF MAN

The characteristic feature of modern civilisation is the progressive triumph of science over superstition, reason over faith. The struggle had been going on ever since the dawn of history. Even during the dark Middle of Ages, when scientific knowledge acquired by the ancient Greeks was nearly forgotten, rationalism asserted itself in the form of scholastic Christian Theology which conceived the ground idea of a law-governed Universe and thus prepared the ground for a revival of science. "The most profound and penetrating of the causes that have transformed society is a mediaeval inheritance."¹

But the teleological order of the Middle Ages was like the orderliness of a prison house: the world, indeed, was not a standing miracle; but everything in it was predetermined by a Divine Providence, and all terrestrial affairs were to be governed by the ecclesiastical not only for man regaining the freedom of thought, will and action, but also for enabling him even to hear "the audible voice of God", which was his own conscience.

The revolt of man, known as the Renaissance heralded the modern civilisation. It took place over a period of two hundred years from the middle of the fourteenth to that of the sixteenth century. As a matter of fact, it was a much longer process. The revival of science began a century earlier with Roger Bacon and Albertus Magnus. They, on their part, had been inspired by the Arabian scholars who had kept the fire of scientific research burning while Europe was merged in the darkness of ignorance during the four hundred years between the conquest of Rome (455 A.D.) by Genseric (c.390-477) and the restoration of the Western Empire by Charlemagne (742-814).

The revival of science, however, was not the specific significance of the Renaissance. It created an intellectual atmosphere in which

the germs of scientific knowledge could again fructify. A mechanistic cosmology had to shake the faith in a teleological order before the grand conception of a law-governed Universe could give birth to modern science. The ecclesiastical authority had to be challenged so that man could remember that God had created him after his own image, and consequently hear the voice of God in his own conscience and realise the almightiness of God in man's sovereignty, dignity and creativeness. Created after the image of God, man was destined to be godlike. "The rejection of ecclesiastical authority, which is the negative characteristic of the modern age begins earlier than the positive characteristic, which is the acceptance of scientific authority."²

Claudius Ptolemaeus' (Ptolemy: 2nd century A.D.) *Almagest* was rescued by Harun-Al-Rashid in 800 A.D. Since then it was revised by a succession of Arab scientists. The new scientific knowledge reached Europe centuries before Copernicus published his epoch-making work. Yet, the knowledge remained in possession of cloistered individuals who, in deference to the ecclesiastical authority, dared speak only in a subdued voice and an equivocal language. Nearly two hundred and fifty years separated Copernicus from Roger Bacon. During that period, the intellectual life of Europe liberated itself from the ecclesiastical authority. That was the period of Renaissance. A successful struggle for spiritual freedom created an intellectual atmosphere congenial for the revival of science. Heliocentrism laid the foundation of a mechanistic cosmology and caused a profound change in the intellectual outlook of Europe.

"With a sharp gesture of impatience, Europe turned away from the vast literature of commentaries and glosses which the pedants of the Middle Ages had inscribed in letters of opium on tablets of lead. Insensibly, mankind acquired a new attitude towards knowledge itself. Authority no longer meant unending wonders, generations grew up for whom truth was not a complete thing, already given in ancient books, but a secret yet to be retrieved from the womb of time."³

It has been said that the discovery of the new world enabled Europe to come out of the dark Middle Ages. But the consequence of the discovery of the heaven by Copernicus was much more revolutionary and far-reaching; and that great revolution, perhaps the greatest of all times, resulted from yet another great discovery—

the discovery of antiquity. That great discovery was made during the hundred and sixty-two years between Petrarch (1304-1374) and Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536) by a brilliant galaxy of poets, painters, critics, essayists, historians and philosophers, who called themselves Humanists. Standard bearers of the revolt of man against the tyranny of the terrestrial agents of God, if not always against God himself, they appealed to the tradition of pagan antiquity. For them, the world appeared "no longer as a vale of tears, a place of painful pilgrimage to another world, but as affording opportunities for pagan delights, for fame and beauty and adventure. The long centuries of asceticism were forgotten in a riot of art, poetry and pleasure."⁴

The neo-Platonic doctrine of the *logos* was taken over by the Greek Fathers of the Church as the philosophical foundation of Christian theology. But the Biblical dogma of creation, most probably interpolated subsequently, could not be reconciled with Plato's view in that respect. Not only Plato, but also the Greeks generally, held that creation out of nothing was impossible. They conceived creation as an artifice or architectural feat of God. The substance out of which God created the world was given—as eternal as God himself. St. Augustine disowned the Platonist tradition of Christian theology, and shifted it on to the foundation of pure (blind) faith buttressed on the authority of Aristotle. The teleological view elaborated by scholastic rationalism reduced man to the helpless position of a mere cog in the vast wheel of the law-governed Universe.

The men of the Renaissance revolted against that degradation. They turned to the Platonic and Epicurean views of life. Believing that the conscience of man was the voice of God, they claimed freedom of acting according to their conscience; and, as any action presupposed the will to act, they also proclaimed freedom of the will. If man was the noblest creation of God, godliness was inherent in him; he was free to will, act, create, and enjoy the beauties of his creation. "A new type of man began with Petrarca, men accustomed to introspectio, who selected their own ideals, and moulded their minds to them. The mediaeval system could prepare them for death; but seeing the vicissitudes of fortune and the difficulties of life, they depended on the intellectual treasures of the ancient world, on the whole mass of accessible wisdom, to develop themselves all round."⁵

But it was neither an uncritical revivalism nor slavish imitation. Petrarch devised the method rediscovering a world long hidden behind a thick veil of fanciful legends and allegories. The classics had to be interpreted by reason freed from the fetters of scholastic logic and ecclesiastical learning. So interpreted, the culture of antiquity was a display of human dignity and of human reason in an atmosphere of intellectual and moral freedom. Humanism of the Renaissance thus was inspired by "those elements of spiritual freedom and intellectual culture without which the civilisation of the modern world would be impossible. The study of Greek implied the birth of criticism, comparison, research. Systems based on ignorance and superstition were destroyed to give way before it. The study of Greek opened philosophical horizons far beyond the dream world of the Churchmen and the monks; it stimulated the germs of science, suggested new astronomical hypotheses and indirectly led to the discovery of America. The study of Greek resuscitated a sense of the beautiful in art and literature."⁶

The significance of the Renaissance has been differently assessed by various historians. Voltaire (1694-1778) described it as the "bright light of liberated reason which shone in contrast with the era of priestly tyranny". He represented the view of the eighteenth century rationalists, who traced their descent from the Renaissance—of antiquity, of literature, of art, of humanism. Jules Michelet, who first used the term Renaissance, together with Henry Hallam (1777-1859), also held that Renaissance was a reassertion of classical rationalism as against the ecclesiastical orthodoxy, religious philosophy and Gothic art of the Middle Ages. The Renaissance continued to be the source of the inspiration of European culture until the reaction after the French Revolution advocated a Catholic revival.

Another view traces the roots of the Renaissance to the Franciscan religious revival. According to it, the distinctive features of the Renaissance culture—individualism and creative spirit originated in the mysticism of the Middle Ages. While some belonging to this school went to the extent of claiming that the Renaissance was the outcome of the mediaeval Germanic culture, further research led to the conclusion that an intellectual ferment had been going on ever since the tenth century. The intellectual development of Europe was not completely interrupted during the Middle Ages; there was a continuity ever since the dawn of

civilisation.

Burckhardt's (1818-97) *Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* was published in 1860. Since then the positive elements of the mediaeval Christian culture have been more fully appreciated. The book still remains the standard work on the subject. Burckhardt describes the Renaissance as a general awakening and rebirth of intellect and human personality: the traditions of scholastic learning with supernatural sanction were rejected in favour of a return to the pre-Christian pagan ways of rationalist and scientific thinking. "By the side of the Church, which had hitherto held the countries of the West together, there arose a new spiritual influence which became the breathe of life for all the more instructed minds in Europe... The logical notion of humanity was old enough—but here the notion became a fact."⁷

Throughout the Middle Ages, learning remained confined to cloisters and schools under the patronage of the Church. The men of the Renaissance challenged that spiritual monopoly. The humanists claimed not only to have an independent judgment based on classical learning, but also a free and rational understanding of the religious traditions. One of the more impetuous among them, Pico della Mirandola (1463-94), for instance, exclaimed:

"God made man at the close of the creation, to know the laws of the Universe, to love its beauty, to admire its greatness. He bound him to no fixed place, to no prescribed form of work, and by no iron necessity, but gave him freedom to will and to move. 'I have set thee free', says the Creator to Adam, 'in the midst of the world that thou mayest 'the more easily behold and see that all is therein. I created thee, a being neither heavenly nor earthly, neither mortal nor immortal, only that thou mayest be free to shape and overcome thyself. Thou mayest sink into a beast, and be born anew to the divine likeness. To thee alone is given a growth and a development depending on thy free will. Thou bearest in thee the germs of a universal life.'"⁸

The significance of the Renaissance undoubtedly was profoundly revolutionary; but it was a revolution in the realm of ideas and values which destroyed the moral sanction of the feudal order, and consequently prepared the ground for the social and political upheavals of the following centuries. From the fact that the Renaissance approximately synchronised with the rise of the trading class, it is deduced that individualism and humanism were principles

of the ideology of the bourgeoisie. Historically, that is not true. The Renaissance was a humanist *revival*; it invoked the humanist tradition of the pagan culture of the Greco-Roman antiquity. Individualism is an equally ancient principle of libertarian thought. The Renaissance declared the dignity and sovereignty of the individual on the authority of the Sophists Epicureans, Stoics and also of early Christianity. A careful study of the economic conditions of the early Middle Ages shows that there was no causal connection between the rise of the trading class and the Renaissance; that humanist individualism was not a mere superstructure, nor a justification, of any particular economic system.

The four hundred years from the conquest of Rome in the middle of the fifth century by the barbarians under Genseric, and the rise of Charlemagne in the ninth century, could be called the Dark Age, when Europe was sunk into an intellectual coma. The fall of the Roman Empire of the West was soon followed by the dramatic rise of the Islamic power which, having mastered the Berber coast, conquered Spain. At the same time, the Norman raiders blockaded the northern and western coasts of the continent. The cumulative result of those events was that, by the ninth century, completely landlocked Europe relapsed into agrarian economy. Since the days of the Phoenicians, the Mediterranean had been the great artery of European trade. With the Arabs sitting astride that ancient channel of traffic, the commercial activity of Europe necessarily declined. "The interruption of commerce brought about the disappearance of the merchants, and urban life collapsed."⁹

It is generally believed that the situation remained completely static until the first crusade at the end of the eleventh century. The whole of the Mediterranean Sea was indeed not open for European trade until then. But even after its main basin had come under the domination of the Arabs, the Byzantine fleet managed to keep the Adriatic and the Aegean Seas open for a limited traffic with the Italian coast. Venetian traders under the protection of the Byzantine Empire, which until then had resisted the Islamic power, resumed traffic even with Africa and Syria by the end of the ninth century. The merchants of Pisa and Genoa also continued the struggle with the Arabs for the control of the Tyrrhenian Sea. Early in the eleventh century, the Genoese seized Sardinia, and a Pisan fleet defeated the Arabs in the Strait of Messina. In the middle of the century, the Pisans entered the port of Palermo,

while the Genoese appeared on the African coast.

If the Italian traders could not be kept out of the Mediterranean for long, the blockade of the northern coast was also broken soon enough. By the end of the ninth century, there "we find a maritime and commercial activity which is in striking contrast with the agricultural economy of the continent....The Vikings were pirates, and piracy is the first stage of commerce. So true is this that from the end of the ninth century, when their other ceased, they simply became merchants."¹⁰ On the other hand, the Swêdes moved eastwards, and following the trade route along which ancient Greek merchants used to carry amber from the Baltic, they reached the Balck Sea by the Middle of the ninth century. There developed a brisk trade in furs and honey as well as slaves. In the tenth and eleventh centuries, the Baltic and the North Sea became the scene of busy commercial navigation. Numerous trading posts were established along the coast line between the mouths of the Vistula and the Elbe. The port of Hamburg was one of them. From those ports, Danish ships traded with Britain. The discovery of old English, Flemish and German coins in the basin of the Baltic proves that at the time of King Canute (first half of the eleventh century) there were trade relations between the mouths of the Thames and the Rhine the eastern coasts of the Baltic Sa and the Gulf of Bothnia.

In the twelfth century, Flanders and Brabant were the most prosperous trading countries of Europe. As a centre of trade, Bruges outshined all other towns of the time, and came to be called "the Venice of the North". Pirenne, however, is of the opinion that it was "a misnomer, for Venice never enjoyed the international importance which made the Flemish port unique". The trade between Flanders and Italy was carried overland until the fourteenth century, when Genoa and Venice established direct maritime relations with Bruges. Even during the dark Middle Ages, there must have been a trading class in landlocked Europe to act as the middlemen between Flanders and Italy. The Hansa towns were prosperous trade centres: the Hanseatic League was a powerful commercial combine, which dominated the political life of those towns and their neighbourhoods. The commercial middle class of Germany colonised the southern and eastern shores of the Baltic before the Teutonic Knights conquered those Slav countries. As early as the middle of the twelfth century, the Hansa League was

the medium for the exchange of goods between the steel yards of London and the fairs of Nijninogorod.

"The volume of mediaeval commerce corresponded to an economic activity whose magnitude is sufficiently vouched for by the ports such as Venice, Genoa, Bruges, by the Italian colonies in the Levant by the shipping of the Hanseatic towns, and by the development of the Champagne fairs. Economists who have asseverated the insignificance of mediaeval commerce have pleaded in support of their argument the absence of a class of capitalist merchants in Europe previous to the Renaissance. They may be disposed to make an exception in favour of a few Italian firms, but it is the exception that proves the rule....Numbers of retail dealers were to be found among the petite bourgeoisie of the towns, but it would be fantastic to reduce the exporters and bankers to their level. Only those who are completely blinded to reality by a preconceived theory can deny the importance and influence of commercial capitalism from the beginning of the economic Renaissance... Mediaeval sources place the existence of capitalism in the twelfth century beyond a doubt."¹¹

A certain amount of commercial activity had been going on in the South as well as in the North even during the previous two centuries. "By the beginning of the twelfth century, the trade and industry of Western Europe had sufficiently recovered from the interruption caused by the Saracens. The great historic cities of the Roman Empire, whose population had been depleted through the destruction of sea-borne commerce, began to recover something of their former numbers and effluence. Villages grew into walled towns. Suburbs of merchants and craftsmen spread themselves around the castle or borough. The merchants and craftsmen organised themselves in guilds and began to demand conditions under which money could be safely made. In broad outline, they claimed to be permitted to compound for their own farm or taxes, to be permitted to make their own by-laws, to have their civil suits tried in their own courts and within their own walls, to be able to select their own officers, and that residence for a year and a day within a town or a borough should be regarded as free."¹²

That is a picture of the rise of the bourgeoisie, which is said to be the social basis of the Renaissance—its economic motive force. The phenomenon was not limited to Italy: the whole of Western Europe was entering the period of a great social upheaval—the so-

called bourgeois revolution. The trading class had entered the field of industrial production outside Italy. Flanders and Brabant were economically the most advanced countries of Europe. Yet, Italy had the privilege of producing what is called the ideology of the rising bourgeoisie. The Renaissance culture flowered there; Italy was the scene of the historic revolt of man against God and His agents on earth, while "in the rest of Europe religion remained, till a much later period, something given from without, and in practical life egoism and sensuality alternated with devotion and repentance."¹³

The spirit of the Renaissance was exactly contrary to the hypocritical piety and sanctimonious cant that characterised the cultural atmosphere of the other European countries. The spirit breathed by "these intellectual giants, these representatives of the Renaissance, show in respect of religion, a quality which is common to youthful natures. Distinguishing keenly between good and evil, they yet are conscious of no sin. Every disturbance of their inward harmony, they feel themselves able to make good out of the plastic resources of their own nature, and therefore they feel no repentance. The need of salvation thus becomes felt more and more dimly, while the ambitious and the intellectual activity of the present either shut out altogether every thought of a world to come or else cause it to assume a poetic instead of a dogmatic form."¹⁴

Evidently, there was no causal connection between the Renaissance and the rise of the bourgeoisie. It is true that Florence, a centre of trade and banking, was the home of the artistic aspect of the Renaissance culture. But the Medicis belonged rather to the mediaeval aristocracy than to the rising bourgeoisie. They were too closely connected with the Vatican to desire the dissolution of the established order, to which they themselves also belonged. Genoa and Venice were more bourgeois; and their contribution to the Renaissance was not much. Venice was the typical home of vulgar materialism. Its rulers pursued the objects of enjoying life, in the carnal sense, of creating the most lucrative luxury industries and of carrying on maritime trade to make money and more money. In cultural history, the mediaeval republic of the Doges did not occupy a place of honour. In the creation of general culture was here wanting, and specially that enthusiasm for classical antiquity."¹⁵

Nor did Venice contribute anything to original thinking, and

literature received but indifferent patronage there. Not until the sixteenth century did Venice recognise the value of Petrarch's poetical works. But by that time, much of his works left as a leagacy to Venice had been lost owing to negligence. Indeed, untill the later half of the fifteenth century, humanist culture was but inadequately represented in the republic of the merchant princes. There was nothing original in Venetian culture. Not one of the great men of the Renaissance was a native of that mercantile city. "The aptitude of the Venetians for philosophy and eloquence was in itself not less remarkable than commerce and politics; but this aptitude was neither developed in themselves nor rewarded in strangers, as it was elsewhere in Italy."¹⁶ There was a general intellecutal backwardness in the first bourgeois republic, compared to the other parts of Italy under despotic rulers. And the Church was not responsible for that deplorable state of things. In Venice, the clergy was completely under the government; yet the barbarous belief in the relics of the Saints prevailed. The State had a markedly theocratic complexion. The Doge was vested with a semi-clerical status.

On the other hand, the feudal tyrants of Southern Italy were the first to patronise the men of the Renaissance; and later on not a few of the great humanists were graced with the benediction of the Pope. At least two of them actually ascended the holy throne, and there was a succession of "Renaissance Popes."

Apart from Emperor Frederic II, the most remarkable figure of the Middle Ages, Alfonso of Aragon and Sicily (1396-2458) who became the king of Naples in 1443, was a promoter of the Renaissance. In addition to George of Trebizond (1395-1484) and several other Greek scholars together with Lorenzo Valla (c.1407-1457) and other humanists resided in the court of Naples. They were all paid handsomely. Yet, the king used to remark: "It is not given to pay you, for your work would not be paid for if I gave you the fairest of my cities; but in time I hope to satisfy you." While appointing Giannozzo Manetti (15th century) as his secretary, Alfonso said: "My last trust I shall share with you." When it appeared that Alfonso might become the king, become Pope Pius II, wrote: "I would rather have that Italy attained peace under his rule than under that of the free cities." Federigo (d.1482), the Duke of Urbino, himself a great scholar and student of science, was another princely patron of the Renaissance.

He was fully conversant with the entire scientific knowledge of the time and desired its practical application. Some of the Sforzas, Francesco (1401-1466) and Ludovico the Moor (1451-1508) particularly, also took keen interest in intellectual matters, and had their children educated in humanist culture.

The Renaissance was a phase of man's age-long struggle for freedom, and freedom is an ideal concept. It was a chapter in the cultural history of mankind, which had its own logic and own momentum. The Renaissance was inspired more by the humanist, rationalist and scientific ideas of the ancient Greek civilisation than by the economic interests and political ambition of the mediaeval trading class.

Rationalism and the spirit of enquiry had been penetrating the seats of learning of Europe ever since the eleventh century. The modest beginning under the reign of Charlemagne (742-814) led to the rise of the Paris University which, by the beginning of the twelfth century, became the scene of the great controversy between Realism and Nominalism. That controversy was the manifestation of an intellectual ferment which disturbed the placidity of religious orthodoxy and ecclesiastical bigotry. Famous Nominalists like Roscellinus, Abelard, Anselm and Occam, were the pioneers of Renaissance Humanism. Aberlard was actually condemned by the Church as an heretic. His pupil, Arnold of Brescia, was the first to raise the standard of revolt in Rome. Those men all belonged to the clergy and lived in the atmospher of theological learning. They did not have the remotest connection with the bourgeoisie, which was still to rise—two hundred years later. The University of Oxford was founded at the end of the twelfth century by a group of scholastics who had studied in Paris. In quick succession, numerous similar seats of learning sprang up in France, Italy and England. "They were the results of a spontaneous popular movement carried out under the shelter and direction of the Church."¹⁷ Disruptive ideas to blossom in the Renaissance were incubated in the mediaeval seats of learning.

Albertus Magnus and Roger Bacon lived early in the thirteenth century. The one is known in history as "great in magic, greater in philosophy and greatest in theology", while the other, as the "admirable doctor" who ushered in the age of reason and revival of science. Bacon also was accused of magical practices. Demonstration of scientific knowledge was in those days confounded with

magical power. Albertus Magnus was great in magic because he made not only chemical experiments (then called alchemy), but also observed botanical phenomena in hothouses. His treatise on plants was the best work on natural history written since Aristotle and until the Renaissance.¹⁸

Of the two basic ideas of original Christianity, that of man was completely eclipsed by that of God during the early Middle Ages, when the minds of the few educated men were absorbed in theology. The current of European culture was fed by three different streams of thought.—Greek philosophy, the tradition of the Roman Empire, and Christian religion. After the fall of Rome, Christianity, which was the newest, became the predominating factor. The renaissance of the European mind, after several centuries, as evidence by the rise of scholastic learning, represented resurrection of the pagan tradition of Rome. Scholastic learning celebrated the dignity of human reason. The second basic idea of original Christianity—that of man and his relation to God—began to emerge out of the thick mist of theological mysticism. Even during the earlier centuries, the Latin learning of the schoolmen revived the memory of Virgil (70-10 B.C.) and Cicero (106-43 B.C.), who represented the spirit of ancient Humanism. But the cultural tradition of the Roman Empire, after all, was a reflection of the greatness of Greece. The European mind therefore, had to go back to that fountain-head to draw inspiration for a new spirit of creativity. Ancient Greek learning had culminated, on the one hand, in the scientific achievements of the Alexandrian period and, on the other, in the ethical ideas of the Epicureans and the Stoics. This latter current flowed into the tradition of pagan Rome.

Epicurus (341-270 B.C.) divided philosophy into physics and ethics, and subordinated the former to the latter, although Epicurean physics provided a metaphysical sanction for the freedom of the individual. His ethics was humanist; his philosophy was the art of enjoying life; it had no concern for death or the power of the Gods whom he called the products of delusion; it was indifferent to the future, because there was nothing after death, the soul being a congerie of atoms which dissolved into its constituents.

Notwithstanding their mysticism, the Stoics developed ethical ideas which were also humanist. They taught: Live according to reason: since the world is composed of matter and God, who are

the reasons of the world, live in harmony with nature: as reason is supreme in nature, it ought to be so in man. Our existence should be intellectual, and all bodily pains and pleasures should be despised. A harmony between the human will and universal reason constitutes virtue.

Both the currents of ancient Greek thought reached Italy—Stoic and Epicurean philosophy directly, the rationalism and scientific knowledge through the Arabs. Therefore, the renaissance of the European mind attained the climax there. While in the rest of Europe it remained a smouldering fire, breaking out in flames here and there, in the form of the heretical movement, and finally stultifying itself in Lutheran neo-dogmatism and Calvinist philistinism, which resulted from the Reformation.

The teachings of the great rationalist scholastics, who invoked the humanist spirit of early Christianity as also of the culture of pagan Rome created a stir throughout the world to Latin Christianity. There was a growing demand for a reform of the Church, moderation of the ecclesiastical authority and liberalising of the dogmatic orthodoxy. The demand expressed itself in the heretical movements which, originating in the south of France (Languedoc) under the impact of Islam in Spain, spread from England to Bohemia. John Wyclif (c.1320-1384), John Huss (1374-1415), Jerome of Prague (c.1371-1416), Arnold of Brescia and others, accused of heresy, and many martyred on that charge, heralded the final triumph of the Renaissance in Italy. The establishment of the mendicant orders with the object of suppressing the heretical movement destroyed the faith in the possibility of reforming the Church.

Originally, Christianity represented the revolt of man against the tyranny of the Jewish God and despotism of imperial Rome. The Sermon on the Mount contained the highest moral ideals ever conceived by human imagination. Christianity was to establish in the world a moral order as conceived by the Greek Sages. The belief was confirmed by the early Church Fathers adopting Platonic theology and Stoic philosophy. For nearly a thousand years, Christianity satisfied the spiritual need of its devotees and the Church was the refuge of learning and culture.

Eventually, ecclesiastical Christianity belied all the promise. Natural religion had convinced man that the Gods were constantly looking after his affairs; Christian monotheism could not carry that

comforting conviction. The ways of its God were believed to be mysterious. Under neo-Platonic influence, in the early Middle Ages, Christianity took over a good deal of Oriental mysticism. But the ordinary religious man felt the need of the protection of some anthropomorphic supernatural power. To satisfy that need, Christianity, having abandoned its original simplicity and taken over a heavy ballast of mysticism, had to develop an elaborate theology to explain the ways of God so as to prove that he was actively interested in the affairs of man. The parallel development was the rise of a priesthood as the intermediary between man and his God. The institution of the Seven sacraments embraced all the important events of the life of the faithful, and completely subordinated him to the priest, who alone was authorised to perform the mystic ritual. Finally, Thomas Aquinas expounded the doctrine that the power over the soul of man had been conferred on the priest by divine ordinance: The priest was entitled "to make the body of Christ, to act in the person of Christ." The elevation of the Pope to a superhuman and supernatural position was the logical consequence of the mystification of Christianity and the rise of an all-powerful priesthood.

An almost godly character and position were conferred upon the High Priest, who had originally been only the Bishop of Rome. It was assumed on the authority of patristic Scriptures that the Pope occupied the place of Christ in the mystical body of the Church, which embraced heaven, earth, the dead and the living. Original Christianity had promised man salvation; ecclesiasticism and the spiritual domination of the priesthood meant death for man. The rebirth was a return to paganism.

Describing the degeneration of the Church, Burckhardt writes: "Safe in the sense of her inviolability, she abandoned herself to the most scandalous profligacy. She levelled mortal blows against conscience and intellect, and drove multitudes of the noblest spirits whom she had inwardly estranged into the arms of unbelief and despair." The Renaissance was the result of that inward estrangement. Despair turned man's eyes to paganism. To enjoy life heartily was the spirit of the Renaissance. It was maintained that the world was destined to happiness as against the Christian view of its misery and early destruction. Renaissance Humanism rose in revolt against the Christian inspiration to the other side of the pious centuries of vain theological disputations, papal tyranny and

priestly profligacy.

The priest was the head of the Christian soul. The man of the Renaissance refused to be herded, and dared take his soul in his own care. Christianity had taught man that the springs, mountains, woods, were the home of evil spirits. The man of the Renaissance shook off the fear of demonical powers. Passionate love of nature, appreciation of her beauties was the most powerful expression of the revolt of man. The spirit of the new culture was expressed vividly in the early Latin poems of the "Clerici Vagantes", who had inherited the secular and sacrelegious traditions of the Languedoc poets. Referring to those early Latin poems, composed mostly by unknown and obscure clergymen, Bruckhardt writes: "A frank enjoyment of life and its pleasures, as whose patrons the gods of heathendom are involed, while Catos and Scipios hold the place of the saints and heroes of Christianity, flows in full current through the rhymed verses. These Latin poems of the twelfth century with all their remarkable frivolity are doubtless a product in which the whole of Europe had a share. Here is a reproduction of the whole ancient view of life—the same unstable existence, the same free and more than free views of life, and the germs at all events of the same pagan tendencies in their poetry."

Given the background of that tradition of spiritual revolt and emotional abandon, the Renaissance was naturally remarkable for its passionate worship of beauty and partiality for the joys of life. "It was the aesthetic against the ascetic", as Lord Acton has described the spirit of the time. All the historians, notwithstanding differences of opinion in other respects, marvel at the Renaissance art. At the same time, Humanism has been criticised for its indifferent, callous negative attitude towards morality. To challenge clerical judgement by boldly posing in practice the problem of the relation between ethics and aesthetics, was an outstanding feature of the Renaissance culture. It was, however, not a new problem, arbitrarily created by the wantonness of the men of lax morality. The problem is as old as philosophy, and therefore can be traced all the way back to the dawn of the history of human culture. The Greeks were very much concerned with it, and offered several solutions—Periclean, Platonic, Epicurean, Stoic. On the basis of the experience of a millenium of Christian culture, the problem arose again in the context of the atmosphere of a general spiritual crisis. Reacting to that crisis, the Renaissance humanists had to face the

problem courageously. Their approach was practical. They did not theorise about the relation between ethics and aesthetics; they lived a life which indicated a solution of the old problem. It confronted them in a somewhat different form, as the conflict between asceticism and aesthetics.

Medieval Christian culture, with the sanction of Stoic tradition, had identified virtue with asceticism. The world was regarded as a vale of tears, everything in it sinful. The more one resisted the temptations of life, the nearer he came to God, and the greater was the chance of salvation. Such a view of life naturally killed all incentives for man to live as man. The ideal was approximation to saintliness, and as that ideal could not be attained, or even honestly pursued, by the average run of mortal men, virtue became the veil of hypocrisy. Apparently cherishing the sublime ideal of divine truth, in practice, the pious Christian lived a life of lies. The world was populated by pseudo-saints and sanctimonious censors of everything natural, everything human. If the entire Christian world was not to be converted into a menagerie of maniacs, trying sincerely or fraudulently to be saints or angels, or a vast laboratory for experiments with untruth and hypocrisy, a revolt against what passed as virtue and morality was the urgent need of the moment. Even a sanctimonious Protestant historian had to admit it subsequently. "I know not whether any man of sound understanding—nay man, not led astray by some phantom, can seriously wish that this state of things had remained unshaken and unchanged in Europe; whether any man persuades himself that the will and power to look the genuine, entire and unveiled truth steadily in the face could ever have been nurtured under such influences. Nor do I understand how any one could really regard diffusion of this most singular condition of human mind as conducive to the welfare and happiness of the human race."¹⁹

Humanism rose as the response to that spiritual crisis. The supernaturalism of the mediaeval Christian culture was opposed with naturalism. If God had made man after his own image, the flesh could not be impure, its desires could not be sinful, and to satisfy them could not be immoral. Humanism was neither immoral nor amoral. It rejected the morality which identified virtue with asceticism, which would kill humanness for the sake of a vain quest for saintliness. A new standard of morality was set up; it was naturalism; man being a part of nature, to enjoy the gifts of

nature, according to her laws, was virtuous; to act otherwise, was vice. The relation between aesthetics and the naturalist conception of ethics is evident. By offering a practical solution of an old problem of cultural history, Renaissance Humanism promoted such a riotous development of art.

Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) wrote in his now famous *Notebook*: "I have always sought for first 'principles, as to how nature works in herself', and how I may approach her, how the eye knows the variety of things, how our visual power works, how visual images came about, and in what manner the theory of sculpture and painting should be framed."²⁰

Scientific observation of nature was the foundation of the Renaissance art. It was not consistent with Christian ethics which identified virtue with asceticism—the vain attempt to suppress natural desires. One could not obey the law of nature, enjoy her beauties, reproduce in works of art his emotional response to those beauties, unless he realised that he was a part of nature, as such subject to her laws, and that the experience of the joy of life qualified him to enjoy the beauties of nature. With the humanists, art thus became an emblem of moral truth. "It was conceived as an allegory, a figurative expression which under its sensuous form concealed an ethical sense."²¹ Renaissance art was not a mere imitation of nature, but discovery of reality which, for Humanism, was the moral truth.

That is quite evident from its development; and the moral significance of the Humanist aesthetics cannot be fully grasped unless the process of its evolution is carefully followed. The earlier Renaissance artists were mostly friars; Dante himself was rather a representative of mediaeval supernaturalism than of the dawning humanist naturalism. Yet, just as Beatrice was more of a woman of flesh and blood, belonging to this "vale of tears", than a mere divine apparition, so did the religious subjects of the paintings of the early Renaissance artists gradually come closer to the flesh and blood of human life, until we reach Titian's Madonna, who was so very far from the idealised Holy Mother of the Christian ascetic conception, not to mention Leonardo's Mona Lisa with the bewitching, if not wicked, smile.

In his treatise on painting, Leonardo writes that an artist must amalgamate his mind with the mind of nature, because only then he can imagine the purpose, gauge the emotion behind every

movement of the subject. Naturalism, the refusal to assume any transcendental mystery behind nature thus was the inspiration of Renaissance art; and naturalism was an ethical attitude inasmuch as it rejected asceticism as the measure of virtue. "The self-assertion of the Humanists was open and unashamed; man was to train himself like a race horse, to cultivate himself like a flower, that he might arrive soul and body to such perfection as morality might covet."²²

The Renaissance humanists were not indifferent to morality; but they refused to practise vice as virtue; they set up a new standard of ethics and created new moral values in their works of art. Nevertheless, to the superficial student, the early Humanist attitude towards ethical problems does appear to be negative. They rejected old standards, which claimed supernatural sanction; but they did not discover any alternative sanction for morality. Until morality found a secular sanction, it could not be divorced from religion or some sort of transcendentalism, without creating an ethical chaos. Humanism did create the impression of such a moral chaos, although the Renaissance art suggested the theory of a spontaneous secular morality, which could be elaborated only on the basis of the subsequently acquired biological knowledge. In this respect also, the genius of Leonardo anticipated future intellectual development by three hundred years. He wrote that nature was not only governed by law, but also the laws could be discovered by man, and they operated in each higher organism as "the rule of mind."

Why did the intellectual awakening noticeable throughout Western Europe ever since the eleventh century reach its climax in Italy? The question becomes all the more puzzling when it is noted that during the two hundred years (1350-1550) when "Italy produced an output of art, scholarship and literature such as the world had not seen since the glory of ancient Athens,"²³ the rest of Europe appeared to relapse into slumber. The fifteenth century was intellectually barren, not only in England, but also in France. Germany was still struggling out of her barbarian past. The question has occupied the mind of historians, and different answers have been suggested.

One fact, however, has not been sufficiently noted. During those two hundred years, which may be characterised as the Golden Age of European culture, national States were rising and consolidating themselves in Western Europe, while Italy was in a state of

political disorder. That fact seems to throw light on the relation between culture and nationalism. It is true that the Italian Renaissance produced a Machiavelli, who has gone down in history as the prophet of nationalism. But as a man of the Renaissance, Machiavelli was much greater; he was also a humanist, and as such cosmopolitan. Humanism and cosmopolitanism were the two logically interlinked strands of the Renaissance culture. Something like nationalism grew in Florence towards the end of the thirteenth century. A certain school of historians deplores that a nascent national culture was swamped by Renaissance humanism. Dante is believed to have been the bard of nationalism. But he was the first to seek inspiration in pagan antiquity, which was certainly not nationalist. Socrates wore the crown of martyrdom because he did not believe in the national gods of Greece; Plato was not a good citizen; Xenophon was a positively bad one; homelessness was a pleasure to Diogenes. Drinking deep in the fountainhead of the cosmopolitan tradition of the ancient humanists, Dante sang: "My country is the whole world." Petrarch has been credited with the saying: "Wherever a learned man fixes his seat, there is his home." According to Petrarch, cosmopolitanism was the expression of the "tranquillity of soul" which remained untouched by everything that troubled the patriotically inclined. Cosmopolitanism, the attitude of those whose interests were personal and not political, or also of those who adopted a non-political stand, became fashionable among the humanist intelligentsia. Lorenzo Ghiberti (c.1378-1455), for example, held: "Only he who has learned everything is nowhere a stranger; robbed of his fortune and without friends, he is yet the citizen of every country, and can fearlessly despise the changes of fortune." Galiollus Martius, who was rescued from the clutches of the Inquisition by Lorenzo Medici (1449-92), wrote: "The man who walked uprightly and acted according to the natural law born within himself would go to heaven, whatever nation he belonged to." Those were the representative views of the men of the Renaissance.²⁴

Apart from its cosmopolitanism, which was a logical corollary to humanism, the Renaissance culture was intensely individualist, and as such came to be the source of inspiration for all libertarian movements in subsequent times. Leone Battista Alberti's (1404-1472) dictum—"men can do all things, if they will"—became famous for generations to come. The respect for the dignity of the

individual, the belief in the creativeness of man, the passionate defence of the freedom of will,—these characteristics features of the Renaissance culture resulted from the influence of the ancient literature. "This period first gave the highest development to individuality, and then led the individual to the most zealous and thorough study of himself in all forms and under all conditions. The mode of conceiving and representing both the individual and human nature in general was defined and coloured by that influence."²⁵

Michelet also had reached a similar judgment about the significance of the Renaissance culture. "To the discovery of the outward world, the Renaissance added a still greater achievement by first discerning and then bringing to light the full, whole nature of man."²⁶

It was thus neither an afflorescence of the Italian national culture nor an ideology of the bourgeoisie. It was the revolt of man—the universal man casting off the fetters of religion, claiming the heritage of the entire human culture, whose vision and creativeness could not be confined to national boundaries. Dante, Petrarch, Boecaccio, Leonardo, Raphael, Michelangelo, Alberti, Pietro Aretino (1492-1556) and many others of the brilliant galaxy of human genius who together composed the Man of the Renaissance—the universal man, the archetype of the future of a free humanity, did not belong to any country, any class, any age. Embodying the culture of the past, they created a new culture which heralded a future still to come.

The political state of Italy in the fourteenth century was congenial for the unique phenomenon because it precluded the possibility of the rise of any power which, on the fraudulent pretext of representing a collective ego, would demand sacrifice of the man of flesh and blood. The Church was discredited; the Vatican was seriously weakened by its own wickedness; there was no national State; nor was there any class to claim the leadership of the established order, which happened to be a disorder, or to herald a new order to be ruled by the liberator.

After the death of Frederic II in the fourteenth century, Italy was broken up into a number of City States, and the southern part of the Peninsula came under the rule of a number of despots—soldiers of fortune. In order to consolidate their position, they sought alliance of the men of talent, presumably imitating Char-

lemagne. Poets, scholars and scientists adorning their courts were expected to endow a legitimacy upon the upstarts. Many of them were exiles from the North—Milan, Florence, Venice—homes of the rising bourgeoisie. Dante was one of them. Giotto de Bondone (1266-1337) also shared with Dante the patronage of Grande della Scala of Verona—one of the earliest despots of Southern Italy. "The Italian despotisms do not appear to have stunted the free expression of human spirit or to have introduced habits of servility and abasement."²⁷

In that atmosphere, birth lost significance. Only merit counted. Mediaeval society, whether aristocratic or ecclesiastical, was ridden by consideration of birth. Only men of noble birth could have a place of honour. In fourteenth century Italy, birth distinctions disappeared. Learning and talent secured the highest place in society. Aristotle had laid down: "nobility rests upon excellence and inherited wealth." Dante revised the philosopher of mediaeval culture and declared: "Nobility rests upon personal excellence or on that of predecessors." Talking with his ancestors in heaven, he argues that "nobility is but a mantle from which time is ever cutting something away, unless we ourselves add daily fresh worth to it."²⁸ Later on, Dante identifies nobility with the capacity for moral and intellectual eminence, and calls *nobilita* the sister of *filosofia*.

That was the starting point of Renaissance humanism. New values were created. It held that birth decided nothing as to the goodness or badness of a man. Gian Francesco Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1459) exclaimed: "There is no other nobility than that of personal merit." Other great humanists agreed with him. In the Middle Ages, man was conscious of himself only as member of a race, people, family or a guild. The Renaissance taught him to realise his individuality—the basic unit of any collective existence. "Man became a spiritual being."²⁹

Another factor which contributed to the triumph of the Renaissance in Italy was the impact of the rationalist and scientific thought of the Arab scholars. After the downfall of the ancient civilisation, its positive outcomes—scientific knowledge and rationalist thought—were inherited by the Arabs. Early Christianity, particularly of the African Patristic period, was contemptuous of science and philosophy. The libraries of Alexandria were destroyed and Hypatia (d.415) murdered on the order of Bishop Theophilus,

three hundred years before the Muslims captured that seat of ancient learning and scientific enquiry. In the beginning of the sixth century, Emperor Justinian (483-565) closed all the schools of Athens, and drove away the teachers who fled to Syria, Mesopotamia and Persia. From them, the Arabs learned the teachings of the Greek philosophers. The heritage of ancient culture eventually reached Europe through Spain and Italy. The Arabs not only rescued Greek learning from the ruins of the ancient civilisation, buried deep under the debris of Christian bigotry; their scholars and philosophers also greatly added to the precious heritage before it reached Europe to herald a new culture and a new civilisation. The Nominalists of the Paris University, who were the first to shake the foundation of Christian orthodoxy, echoed the Arab philosopher Avicenna (Ibn Sina. 908-1037) who had first raised the question about the relation between the Universals and the particulars. The Arab philosophers were generally inclined towards empiricism; therefore, they made substantial contributions to the scientific knowledge inherited from the Greeks. By the ninth century, the most important Greek works on science had been translated into Arabic. The greatest of the Arab thinkers, Averroes (Ibn Rushd. 1126-98), was recognised in the Middle Ages as the most authoritative commentator of Aristotle. He held that, while the soul perishes with man's brain, reason was immortal and therefore, by cultivating reason, man can enter into a communion with the Universal and Eternal. It was in the form of Averroes' rationalism that Arabic thought influenced European intellect through Spain.

Roger Bacon, Albertus Magnus and Emperor Frederic II, the three most outstanding personalities of the Middle Ages, were disciples of the great Arab thinker. Averroism was condemned by Christian orthodoxy as the source of the most arrant heresies. But apart from historically heralding the Renaissance, rationalist scholasticism and the heretical movements were like streams of clear water running into the sand.

The influence of Arab thought in Italy was more dynamic. There, the European mind directly felt the impact of its iconoclastic and scientific aspects. In the thirteenth century the University of Padua, was the centre of intellectual life in northern Italy. Under the influence of scholastic rationalism that centre of mediæval learning became "a strong fortress of barbarism, and struggled against humanism until the seventeenth century."³⁰

It is instructive to note that the University of Padua was patronised by the merchant princes of Venice. That fact throws light on the relation between the rising bourgeoisie and the Renaissance. Scholastic rationalism freed the human mind from the rusty chains of Christian orthodoxy, but at the same time forged a new chain, the authority of Aristotle as interpreted by Averroes. The soul of man was liberated from the tutelage of the priest. But his mind still remained fettered by a blind faith in terrestrial authorities. Freedom of the will had no meaning unless it led to freedom of action. Spiritual liberation must express itself in man becoming conscious of his sovereignty, of his creativeness, which knew no bounds. The heritage of ancient culture could not become the source of inspiration for a new stage of human development, unless rationalism was reinforced by humanism. In Padua, the rationalists struggled against the physicists until scholasticism collapsed under the frontal attack of the humanist Petrarch. Dante represented the transition from mediaevalism to modernism. He was the first romanticist, should the men of the Renaissance be so characterised, because they dared take destiny into their own hand and felt that each had the power to shape the world he wanted to live in.

The strongest impetus to the Renaissance came from the South of Italy. The scientific knowledge of the Greeks considerably expanded by the Arab scholars, came to Europe through that way. While Padua remained the stronghold of scholastic rationalism, Salerno became the centre of scientific learning. Until the seventeenth century, medical students from all parts of Europe flocked there to learn the teachings of Hippocrates and Galen, elaborated by the researches of their Arabic pupils. The ethnological conception of a privileged Christianity was weakened by the contact with the new vigorous faith preached by the Arabian Prophet. That unsettling and revolutionary impact was felt directly and more strongly in the South of Italy.

"The knowledge and admiration of the remarkable civilisation which Islam had attained was peculiar to Italy from the time of the Crusades. This sympathy was fostered by the half-Mohammedan governments of some Italian princes and by constant commercial intercourse with the Eastern and Southern Mediterranean. In the thirteenth century, the Italians recognised a Mohammedan ideal of nobleness, dignity and pride."³¹

Emperor Frederic II, who had left the inhospitable northern climate of Germany for the sunny olive groves of southern Italy and Sicily, could be called the foster-father of the Renaissance. Himself a highly cultured person, he was a friend of the enlightened Saracens, a protector of learning and promoter of scientific studies. His court at Palermo set the model for the courts of the despots of Southern Italy, which were adorned by the presence of great humanists. In the tradition of his famous grandfather, Frederick Barbarossa (c.1125-1190), Frederic II continuously waged a war against the Pope and instigated the Italian princes to defy the authority of the Vatican. As a token of their defiance, the princes patronised secular learning and promoted Humanism. "It was upon the same territory (Southern Italy) that the spirit of freedom first took its rise in Europe. For, that strip of land in lower Italy and specially Sicily, was then the native home of enlightened minds and the cradle of the idea of toleration."³²

While they were appealing to Plato in their struggle against rationalist scholasticism, which invoked the authority of Aristotle, the humanists were also Epicureans. Their individualism was based on the Epicurean as well as the Stoic tradition. While Platonic humanism and the scientific knowledge of the Greeks came to Italy through the intermediary of the Arab scholars and thinkers, Epicureanism as also the Stoic view of life had reached there directly centuries ago and deeply influenced the intellectual atmosphere of Rome immediately before the advent of Christianity. During the dark ages following upon the sack of Rome by the barbarians from Germany, the works of Epicurus were destroyed. But the writings of Cicero and the didactic poems of Lucretius (c.96-55 B.C.) had survived the furore of Christian piety. The Renaissance humanists not only welcomed the message of ancient Greece received through the Arab scientists and philosophers, but also drew upon the native tradition of pagan antiquity. From Cicero and Lucretius, they inherited the Epicurean vision of a godless Universe and of pleasure derived from virtue. Already in the twelfth century, Epicureanism had become the bugbear of the Church. It was condemned as heresy throughout Italy. When Florence was largely destroyed by fire twice in the middle ages, the calamities were characterised as "divine judgement on the heresy of the luxurious and gluttonous sect of Epicureans."³³ Lorenzo Valla, a younger contemporary of Petrarch, wrote a "Discourse on

Pleasure" which scandalised the hypocritical clergy and the blasphemous Vatican, but was read avidly in the cultivated courts of the rebellious princes. Dante testifies to what an extent the Epicurean view of life had influenced the cultural atmosphere of Italy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The *Inferno* was populated by two classes of sinners—heretics and the Epicureans. The great humanists of the fourteenth century (Petararch, Boccaccio, Valla, etc.) were deeply influenced by the writings of Cicero and Seneca (c.4 B.C.-65 A.D.).

The Epicurean stamp on the humanist view of life and the Renaissance culture in general is unmistakable. Nevertheless, not a few of the most enthusiastic apostles of the new culture belonged to the Church, including some members of the monastic orders created to act as the "spiritual police"—to protect Christian orthodoxy and ecclesiastical authority against rationalism and heresy. The spirit of the Renaissance thus was truly humanist; it heralded a universal cosmopolitan culture, which expressed neither selfish class interest nor the special genius of any nation.

Apart from the tradition of the ancient Greco-Roman culture and the impact of Arabian learning, the advent of Pope Nicholas V (Pope from 1447 to 1455) has been identified by competent historians as a contributing cause of the Renaissance. "On that day, the new learning took possession of the Holy See, and Rome began to be considered the capital of the Renaissance." While still an obscure monk, the new Pope is reported to have run into debt for collecting Greek manuscripts. When he reached the Vatican, his agents searched half the world for hidden treasures of ancient knowledge and learning. A large number of lay scholars were employed at the Vatican to translate profane Greek dramas. No less than five thousand old manuscripts on secular subjects were placed on the shelves of the Vatican Library.

After Nicholas V, who went down in history as the "Renaissance Pope", the humanist historian Aeneas Sylvius ascended the Pontifical throne as Pius II. He was the typical man of the Renaissance and has been described as "enemy of hypocrisy and superstition, courageous and consistent". In him history saw the remarkable spectacle of a prince of the prelate initiating criticism of the Scriptures. He argued that "even if Christianity were not confirmed by miracles, it might still be accepted on account of its morality." That set the tone of the humanist attitude to Christianity. Under the

regime of that "most modern of mediaeval Popes", Lorenzo Valla, who had narrowly escaped the tentacles of the Inquisition, became a high functionary at the Vatican, and from that protected position wrote his famous book exposing the "Donation of Constantine" as a fiction. That legendary gift of the first Christian Emperor was the sanction for the Bishop of Rome claiming supreme temporal power in the Western Empire. "He is, indeed, the founder of freedom of speech in history. When his history of his own time was published, a great number of passages injurious to his countrymen and to his ecclesiastical brethren had to be suppressed. They have been printed lately and contain in fifty pages the concentrated essence of the wickedness of Italy."³⁴

Pope Leo X invited Raphael (1483-1520) to undertake the restoration of ancient Rome. Under him, "the Vatican resounded with song and music and their echoes were heard through the neighbourhood as a call of joy and gladness."³⁵ The humanist courtier Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533), who was Ambassador of Ferrara to Rome at that time, kept on record that under Leo X the Vatican was "a greater centre of culture than the Florence of the Medicis". Bibbiena's profane comedies were applauded in the Holy City. Marsilio Ficino (1433-99) wrote that towards the end of the fifteenth century, when the Renaissance was in its high tide, there was no place where liberty prevailed as at Rome. Pope Nicholas V handsomely rewarded Filelfo for his blistering satires. And Poggio (1380-1459), famous for his devastating mockery, the fiercest critique of the clergy, enjoyed the patronage of the Vatican for half a century. Matteo Bandello (1485-1561) was a Dominican monk. Finally, there is the testimony of Erasmus who visited Rome in 1515, and warmly extolled "the light and liberty" he found there.

The Christian belief in a divine government of the world had been destroyed by the prevalent spectacles of injustice and misery. Therefore, Dante, an intensely religious man, surrendered the life on this earth to the caprices of fortune. In his old age, even Poggio wrote a book on "The Miseries of the Human Condition", in which he depicted the world as a vale of tears and expressed doubt about the possibility of human happiness. That pessimistic view was general among the humanists, who took up a cold and resigned attitude towards the prevailing atmosphere of violence and misrule. Rejecting the notion of Providence, they spoke symbolically of the turning of the wheel of fortune. But the danger of sinking in the

treacherous morass of fatalism was headed off by turning to the ancient belief in astrology. The course of life was determined by the movement of heavenly bodies which were physical systems. Practice of astrology meant that man wanted to know what would be the course of his life if he did not take destiny in his own hand. The belief in astrology, therefore, expressed the will to penetrate the future so as to determine it.

Great humanists, however, were free from the superstition. Petrarch, for example, was contemptuous about the astrologers. He mercilessly exposed the lies of their system. Giovanni Villani declared: "No constellation can subjugate the free will of man." Matteo Villani condemned astrology as a vice, and Mirandola described it as the source of "all impurity and immorality". He also exclaimed with his characteristic vehemence: "The dark Ages which spared themselves the trouble of induction and free enquiry, can have no right to impose upon us their dogmatic verdict."³⁶

Burckhardt, himself an ardently religious man and anxious to show that the men of the Renaissance were essentially Christian, writes: "Their Humanism was in fact pagan, and became more and more so as its sphere widened in the fifteenth century. Its representatives, advance-guard of unbridled individualism, display as a rule such a character that even their religion becomes a matter of indifference to us. They easily got the name of atheists and spoke freely against the Church."³⁷

With their paganism, the humanists humanised religion itself. Codrus Urcius, a professor at the University of Bologna, wrote against the Church and the monks in the most abusive language. But he also wrote reverentially about "the true god-man Jesus Christ". Yet his house and manuscripts were set on fire by the "spiritual police". Thereupon, driven to a frenzy of wrath and despair, the old scholar rushed out in the street and there, standing in front of an image of the Madonna, exclaimed: "Listen to what I tell you; I am not mad: I am saying what I mean. If I ever call upon you in the hour of my death, you need not hear me or take me among your own, for I will go and spend eternity with the Devil."

With the humanists, the idea of greatness and fame replaced the Christian faith in heaven. Virtue was to be practised not for any recompense in the world to come, but to conquer a place of distinction and honour in this, and to be immemorialised in history. The notion of immortality was thus given a new meaning.

It was not an idle dream to be realised, if ever, by the grace of a capricious Providence; it could be attained by man's own effort. The ideal of immortality could be realised in the permanence of the product of the creative genius of man, in the continuity of human culture. That noble ideal was found in "Scipio's Dream"—the sixth book of Cicero's *Republic*. Therein is a fascinating description of the life of great men after their death. It is a picture of the pagan heaven. In the *Divine Comedy*, the devout Dante also dreamed "Scipio's Dream" and set the pattern of the humanist ideal of fame and historical greatness.

The spirit of scientific enquiry inherited by the Arabs from the Greeks had reached Western Europe through Spain early in the thirteenth century. But the University of Paris and other seats of learning were preoccupied with theological disputes and metaphysical speculations. Empiricism and scientific study remained confined to a few individuals like Albertus Magnus, Roger Bacon and Gerbert of Rheims. "The Renaissance of the twelfth century", therefore, was unable to defeat mediaevalism in Western Europe as did the Italian Renaissance two hundred years later.

The failure of the ancient Greek philosophers to explain nature in natural terms led to Platonic mysticism, which prepared the ground for the rise of the Christian religion.³³ Originally a creation of the innate rationalism of man, the desire to know the cause of things, religion filled up the spiritual vacuum created by the inadequacy of ancient scientific knowledge. For a thousand years, the European mind was dominated by the religious mode of thought. Eventually, Arab scholars laboriously collected the scattered records of knowledge left behind by Thales, Pythagorus, Democritus, Hippocrates, Euclid, Archimedes, Aristarchus, Hipparchus, Galen and other forerunners of modern science. A succession of them—Khaled, Ben Yezid, Ben Musa, Geber, the two Al'Hazens, Avicenna and Averroes—sifted, coordinated, elucidated and added to that precious patrimony of mankind. It ultimately reached Europe to stimulate the age-long struggle for spiritual freedom and search for truth. The examination of social political freedom—modern civilisation—resulted from that struggle.³⁸

While the prosperous traders of Genoa, the powerful merchant princes of Venice and the opulent bankers of Florence, preoccupied with power politics, court intrigues, wars waged with mer-

cenary soldiers were unconcerned with larger political issues of general interest, Rienzi (1313-1354) established a republican government at Rome and inscribed on its banner "Liberty, Justice and Peace." The great Petrarch was the Tribune's friend, philosopher and guide; but that was before Renaissance humanism had brought about a spiritual revolution—a revolutionary change in the cultural atmosphere. The ignorant and superstitious masses of the Roman people could be still swayed by the monks. They turned against Rienzi shortly after they had acclaimed him as the Tribune. "The political scheme of Rienzi failed. But, it started a movement in the world of thought, deeper and more enduring than State transactions. For his ideas were adopted by the greatest writer then living, and were expounded by him in the most eloquent and gracious prose that had been heard for a thousand years. Petrarch called the appearance of the patriotic Tribune and rhetorician the dawn of a new world and Golden age."⁴⁰

The European mind resumed the struggle for spiritual freedom more successfully in Italy, because the revival of empiricism and scientific enquiry was more widespread there thanks to the fact that a large share of the patrimony of ancient scientific knowledge had fallen to that fortunate land. At any time, among any civilised people, individuals may appear who, like Roger Bacon and Gerbert of Reims, for instance, might be "masters of the whole knowledge of the age. It is another matter when a whole people takes a natural delight in the study and investigation of nature, at a time when other nations are indifferent, that is to say, when the discoverer is not threatened or wholly ignored, but can count on friendly support of congenial spirits. that this was the case in Italy, is unquestionable."⁴¹

The Italian Renaissance is usually interpreted as a revival of art and literature. The scientific work of the period is not only ignored, but some historians go to the extent of maintaining that its contribution to science was inconsequential and negligible. The artistic and literary creation of the Renaissance was, indeed, so very imposing as to hold historians spellbound; thus, they overlooked its other aspects. Beginning from Dante, most of the great personalities of the period were keenly interested in scientific study and many made contributions which have not yet been quite surpassed. Leonardo da Vinci, for example, anticipated not a few of the technological achievements of our time. Dante was a keen student of

natural phenomena. Petrarch was not only a geographer, but also authored a book called *Aspects of Nature*. Giotto was a naturalist. Botany and Zoology were studied in the gardens of the Academy of Florence. The study of the structure and their classification was taken up from the point where Theophrastus had left off more than two thousand years ago. They also recommenced the recording of the story of the animal world as Aristotle had begun. Aeneas Sylvius was a geographer as well as a historian. Salerno and Bologna were the principal centres for the study of the medical sciences. "Latrochemistry," which replaced alchemy, contributed to the development of the art of healing diseases. "A stream of new chemical thought begins in the period of the Renaissance. In the schools latrochemistry, biological and medical thought became prevalent."⁴² All the great painters and sculptors were keen students of anatomy so much so as to convince the great historian Michelet that the discovery of man by the Renaissance was a great achievement than the outer world, by which he meant knowledge of nature. The italians were the first among modern people to be keenly interested in the observation of nature.⁴³

The science of perspective (optics) and a minimum knowledge of anatomy and physiology are the pre-requisites for realistic painting and sculpture. the treatise of Andreas Vasilus on "Human Body" was published simultaneously with the famous work of Copernicus. It was based on anatomical and physiological researches carried on at the schools of Padua and Bologna for many years. Mondino da Zuzzi had published a textbook on anatomy as early as the end of the thirteenth century. As testified by Leonardo da Vinci, the object of the Renaissance artists was to see the world in the light of nature, and for that purpose they studied nature and the human body in the minutest detail. "In order to obtain an exact and complete knowledge of these, I have dissected more than ten human bodies, destroying all the various members, and removing even the very smallest particles of flesh which surrounded these veins without causing any effusion of blood other than the imperceptible bleeding of the capillary veins. And as one single body did not suffice for so long a time, it was necessary to proceed by stages with so many bodies as would render my knowledge complete; and this I repeated twice over in order to discover the differences."⁴⁴

As regards the achievements of particular men, the Renaissance

produced not only a scientific prodigy like Leonardo, he was matched by Toscanelli and Pacioli. In the fifteenth century, these three were the masters of mathematics, natural sciences and technology. Leonardo had rejected Ptolemy's "Almagest" before Copernicus, and the latter freely called himself Leonardo's pupil. The typical men of the Renaissance were of universal Genius—universal men, in the true sense. "Prodigies of versatility were not infrequent. Men passed and repassed from painting to sculpture, from sculpture to architecture and metal work, and from these forms of energy to poetry, philosophy and natural sciences. The classical examples of the omnicompetence were Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci and Alberti."⁴⁵ Raphael was also an architect, while Michelangelo built the fortifications of Florence. In technology, Leonardo was two hundred years ahead of his time. While Galileo was till an obscure teacher of astronomy at Padua, Leonardo not only anticipated theoretically twentieth century feats of technology, but actually built a model aeroplane and tried to fly.

Leonardo has been described a mighty universal genius who can be compared to Aristotle, and as a master of the physical sciences, to Archimedes. "A painter, sculptor, engineer, architect, physicist, biologist and philosopher, was Leonardo, and in each role he was supreme. Perhaps no man in the history of the world shows such a record. His performance, extraordinary as it was, must be recokened as small compared with the ground he opened up, the grasp of fundamental principles he displayed, and the insight with which he seized upon the methods of investigation in each branch of enquiry."⁴⁶ Believing that painting was based on geometry, Leonardo mastered that science, and for that purpose carried on extensive studies in mathematics generally. He dissected human bodies in order to acquire exact anatomical knowledge, without which he held the human form could not be truly reproduced either in painting or in sculpture. For understanding optics, he studied the structure of human eye.⁴⁷

The famous eighteenth century surgeon, William Hunter, expressed the following opinion: "I am fully persuaded that Leonardo was the best anatomist at that time in the world. Leonardo was certainly the first man we know of to introduce the practice of making anatomical drawings." As regards geology, Leonardo anticipated Hutton and Lyell by three hundred years in formulating the basic ideas of what subsequently came to be known as

the uniformitarian theory. He argued that the biblical deluge was not universal, nor were fossils found inland and on mountain tops laid down there by the great flood. He visualised that water circulated through rain, rivers, sea, cloud and again came down as rain; that ancient bottoms of seas had become mountains, and mountains had been washed away by rain. Though gifted with the power of soaring imagination, which enabled him to anticipate profound theories of science, in practice, Leonardo depended regorously on experiment and observation.

"All true sciences are the result of experience, which passes through our senses. Where reason is not, its place is taken by clamour; this never occurs when things are certain. Therefore, where there are quarrels, there true science is not, because truth can only end one way."⁴⁸ Leonardo had avoided theological controversy as irrelevant for his pursuits, until the study of psychology brought him to the problem of soul. Having described soul as a part of human existence, he declared: "The rest of the definition of the soul, I leave to the imagination of friars, those fathers of the people who know all secrets by inspiration." That may appear to be evasive; but the significance of the thinly veiled sarcasm is clear enough. To summarise, "if we had to choose one figure to stand for all time as the incarnation of the true spirit of the Renaissance, we should point to the majestic form of Leonardo da Vinci."⁴⁹

Leonardo's giant personality cast its shadow to eclipse the reputation of other scientists of the Renaissance. There was, for example, Philippus Aureolus Paracelsus (1493-1541), who was the first to find fault with Galen, and criticised as humbug and fraud what passed as medical science until that time. He also set aside the mystical practices of alchemy and harnessed the knowledge of chemistry of his time (iatrochemistry) in the service of medicine. Then, Vasalius of Padua criticised Galen's notion about the structure of human bodies, and began teaching anatomy by dissecting corpses. There were others who followed Vasalius; among them was Hieronymus Fabricius (1537-1619), from whom Harvey learned about the valves of veins. An Academy for the empirical study of nature was founded at Naples by Bernardino Telesio (1509-1583).

The revival of science did not take place to promote the development of capitalist production. Neither Leonardo nor Copernicus nor Galileo had any connection with the rising bourgeoisie.

The latter two were devout Christians, and Leonardo was a member of the "intellectual aristocracy" which the Renaissance was supposed to have produced according to the materialist conception of history. The traders and money-lenders of the Italian cities were too vulgarly selfish and materialistic to patronise science. Columbus found no patronage from his native Genoa and had to appeal to the feudal court of Spain to finance his expedition. Venice contributed the least to the Renaissance. Florence played a role because the Medicis, engaged in a struggle for power with the Vatican, wanted to outshine the Renaissance Popes as patrons of learning, literature and art.

A recent study by a modern sociologist of Marxist persuasion could not help revealing that there was no causal connection between the rise of the bourgeoisie and the Renaissance. "this new intellectual spirit which was formed in the towns, and not in some monastery, takes up positions opposed to the town by a curious inversion typical of the *litterati*.... Petrarca, Poggio and Sadoletto showed their desire to keep at a distance the bourgeoisie engaged in his daily routine."⁵⁰ The same study also reveals that the bourgeoisie was indifferent to the Renaissance and admits that the vulgar trading class was culturally influenced by the revival of science, learning, literature and art. "The bourgeoisie, who had been engaged in active life, above all in business, had, to begin with, forced the representatives of pure learning on to the periphery of existence. But in the meantime, the bourgeoisie had become untrue to its origins or, at any rate, to its original driving power. Now activities at the centre were once more influenced from the periphery, culture coloured economic development and changes of sociological origin were helped along by the intellectual and cultural influence of the intelligentsia. The *litterati* were encouraging the bourgeoisie to become less and less true to itself."⁵¹ So, to be influenced by the new culture was against the nature and "driving power" of the bourgeoisie. Renaissance Humanism was not the ideology of the rising bourgeoisie.

The Renaissance was the resumption of man's struggle for spiritual freedom and search for truth undertaken at the dawn of civilisation, but confused and partially interrupted by the religious mode of thought which prevailed for more than a millennium. The Renaissance did not herald the rise of any particular class; it was the revolt of man, patronised and promoted by all the free spirits

of the time belonging to the feudal aristocracy, the Church or the rising class of traders. Classicism was conservative. As against it, the romanticism of the humanists proclaimed the freedom of will, and faith in the creativeness of man. It liberated reason from the yoke of teleology. It maintained that the law-governed Universe did not preclude revolutions to be brought about by man's will to freedom and urge to create. It declared the spiritual liberation of man, and ushered in the era of modern civilisation which immensely expanded the scope of human activity. Growing knowledge of nature increased the power of man to prosecute the struggle for freedom more effectively than ever before.

NOTES

1. Lord Acton, *Lectures on Modern History*.
2. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*.
3. H.A.L. Fisher, *History of Modern Europe*.
4. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*.
5. Lord Acton, *Lectures on Modern History*.
6. J.A. Symonds, *the History of Renaissance*.
7. Burckhardt, *Renaissance*.
8. *Discourse on the dignity of Man*.
9. Henri Pirenne, *Economic and Social History of Mediaeval Europe*.
10. Pirenne, *Ibid*.
11. Pirenne, *Ibid*.
12. Fisher, *History of Modern Europe*.
13. Burckhardt, *Renaissance*.
14. Burckhardt, *Ibid*.
15. Burckhardt, *Ibid*.
16. Sabellico.
17. Fisher, *History of Modern Europe*.
18. See Charles Singer, *From Magic to Science*.
19. Ranke, *History of the Reformation*.
20. McCurdy, *The Mind of Leonardo da Vinci*.
21. Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man*.
22. Sir Walter Raleigh, *Some Authors*.
23. Fisher, *History of Europe*.
24. an outstanding exponent of Cosmopolitan humanism was Erasmus.
25. Burckhardt, *Renaissance*.
26. Michelet, *History of France*.
27. Fisher, *History of Europe*.

28. *Divine Comedy.*
29. Burckhardt, *Renaissance.*
30. Lange, *History of Materialism.*
31. Burckhardt, *Renaissance.*
32. Lange, *History of Materialism.*
33. Giovanni Villani, *Chronicle.*
34. Lord Acton, *Lectures on Modern History.*
35. Burckhardt, *Renaissance.*
36. Mirandola, *Discourse on the Dignity of Man.*
37. Burckhardt, *Renaissance.*
38. "Greek science was not killed, it died. It had reached the limit of possible expansion within the mould in which it was cast." B. Farrington, *Science in Antiquity.*
39. "Science is the last step in man's mental development, and it may be regarded as the highest and most characteristic attainment of human culture. It is a very late and refined product that could not develop except under certain special conditions. Even the conception of science, in its specific sense, did not exist before the times of the great Greek thinkers—before the Pythagoreans and Atomists, Plato and Aristotle. At this first conception seems to be forgotten and eclipsed in the following centuries. It had to be rediscovered and re-established in the age of the Renaissance." Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man.*
40. Lord Acton, *Lectures on Modern History.*
41. Burckhardt, *Renaissance.*
42. Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man.*
43. See Humboldt, *Cosmos.*
44. Leonardo da Vinci, quoted in E. MacCurdy's *The Mind of Leonardo da Vinci.*
45. Fisher, *History of Europe.*
46. Watham, *History of Science.*
47. See J.P. Richter, *The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci.*
48. Quoted by J.P. Richter, *Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci.*
49. Watham, *History of Science.*
50. Alfred von Martin, *Sociology of the Renaissance.*
51. *Ibid.*

Chapter V

REVOLT OF THE ANGELS

By its very nature, the humanist culture of the Renaissance was exclusive, in the sense that its diffusion was limited by the smallness of the educated class of the time. It heralded a new civilisation still to rise; new ideas were conceived and novel ideals visualised to stimulate fresh human activities and to inspire more ambitious human endeavours. Whatever the future might hold in store for it, Renaissance humanism had to cope with the given intellectual equipments, emotional preoccupations and cultural atmosphere of the epoch. "For lack of education, the great mass of the public was incapable of understanding works of refined order. Nor did this uncultivated mass consist only of the lower classes, for the large majority of the rich and noble have always belonged to it."¹

Thus popular mind was still saturated with religion; and religion was not something superimposed. It was a creation of the human mind. Man's mind cannot outgrow its own creation until it has created something new which, being bigger and brighter than the old, outshines it. Humanism was destined to replace supernaturalism. But the process was bound to be long and laborious. Meanwhile, religion, belief in the supernatural, held sway on man's mind. The social and cultural history of Europe remained interwoven with the ecclesiastical history; the moral and intellectual life of man was dominated by the concern for his relation with God.

The Christian faith was so stubbornly abiding because it rested upon the experience of two cataclysms. Originally, it offered the hope of a life after death to man terrified by the spectre of the dissolution of the antique social order. Later on, the belief in the evangelical mission of the Church enabled the Christian world to survive the chaos following upon the fall of the Roman Empire. As a distant hope hereafter and an immediate protection in this

world, Christainity became the sheet-anchor of European life, and the Church its embodiment.

"A slow but sure and unbroken progress of intellectual culture had been going on within its bosom for a series of ages..... All the vital and productive elements of human culture were here united and mingled. The development of society had gone on naturally and gradually; the innate passion and genius for science and for art constantly received fresh food and fresh inspiration, and were in their fullest bloom and vigour; civil liberty ws established upon firm foundations; solid and systematical political structures in benificent rivalry, and the necessities of civil life led to the combination and improvement of physical resources; the laws which eternal Providence had impressed on human affairs were left to their free and tranquil operation; what had decayed, had crumbled away and disappeared; while the germs of free life continually shot up and flourished; in Europe were found united the most intelligent, the bravest and the most civilised nations still in the freshness of youth."² This idealised picture of the Middle Ages was not conjured out of the imagination of the chauvinistic European. It was realistic to the extent that it depicted Christianity as the central mooring of European life and the only cohesive factor of society until the close of the Middle Ages.

Opposing supernaturalism with humanism, attaching greater importance to the reality of life in this world than to the idle dreaan of happiness in heaven, the Renaissance demanded a complete break with the tradition of the age of religion. The Reformation which followed, on the other hand, was in conformity with that venerable tradition. Therefore, the latter appeared to be more popular and successful than the former, which was like a dazzling flash out of nowhere to be drowned again in the surrounding darkness of classical immobility, conventional orderliness and catholicity of the Christian religion.

The Renaissance was a revolution, checked by the Reformation and the so-called Counter-Reformation. So-called, because originally, it was a measure against the revolt of man, initiated under the patronage of Ferdinand and Isabella (1451-1504) of Spain before the Reformation broke out in Germany. After the Spanish conquest of Italy and the siege of Rome by Charles V (1500-1558), the political situation in the country changed; the Renaissance was

cought in the ebb tide. But in the meantime, humanism had crossed the Alps and radiated north-wards, though there also it was pushed into the backwaters by the rising tide of the Reformation. The resurgence of man had to bide time for the revolt of the angels to blow over.

Burckhardt concluded his study of the Renaissance with the following observation: "It can hardly be doubted that the Renaissance would soon have destroyed those two Orders (Franciscan and Dominican) had it not been for the German Reformation and the Counter-Reformation which that provoked. Their saints and popular preachers could hardly have saved them. And who can say what fate was in store for the papacy itself, if the Reformation had not saved it." That was a sound judgement about the historical significance of the Reformation.

As a matter of fact, the revolt of the angels against the sacrilege of the temple of God, and to restore religion to the pristine purity of faith, had broken out first in Italy during the later period of the Renaissance. The standard of revolt was raised by Savonarola at the end of the fifteenth century in Florence, the native home of the rising bourgeoisie, who were supposed to have created Renaissance humanism as the ideology of their class. Freely opposing the "atheism, immorality" and the secular culture of the Renaissance, Savonarola passionately advocated return of the virtues of early Christianity, and incited the Florentine "democracy" in a successful revolt against the corrupt government of the opulent bourgeoisie. To divert popular attention from the degeneration of religion and corruption of the Church, exposed by the humanists, Savonarola denounced the vices of the temporal rulers—usury, luxury, amusements and scandalous fashions. Captivating the poor people's imagination with the picture of the early Christian Communes, and swaying the popular mind by the fanatical appeal to the faith in a just and benevolent God, Savonarola attained his ideal, which was the establishment of the a theocratic State in Florence, in which "all men were to bow in blessed humility before the Unseen." The Florentine friar was neither a descendant of the great heretics of the Middle Ages nor was he a forerunner of the Reformation. Because, he did not challenge the authority of the Pope and the spiritual pretension of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. He represented the Counter-Reformation, and as such was the embodiment of the religious tradition which resisted the radi-

ation of the spirit of Renaissance.

At the end of the Middle Ages, Europe entered a period of clash between the two currents of thought underlying her entire cultural tradition. Both the currents—of rationality and religion—flowed from pre-Christian antiquity. Essentially, both expressed man's desire to know and will to be free. But in course of time, religion disowned its original justification of the European culture which closed the Middle Ages and heralded the modern civilisation, was graphically depicted in Savonarola's attitude to, and appreciation of, the intellectual heritage of pre-Christian antiquity which inspired the Renaissance. Attacking the Humanists, he thundered:

"The only good thing we owe to Plato and Aristotle is that they brought many arguments which we can use against the heretics. Yet, they and other philosophers are now in hell. An old woman knows more about faith than Plato. It would be good for religion if any books that seem useful were destroyed. When there were not so many books and not so many arguments and disputes, religion grew more quickly than it has done since."³ The militant monk condemned science as harmful because it distracted man's mind from God to secular matters. But at the same time, he realised the necessity of prostituting knowledge and learning. Science was Satan's snare; yet, a few should have to brave it, so that "there may be no want of intellectual athletes to confute the Sophism of the heretics."

The human mind had been accustomed to the religious mode of thought for a whole millennium. Even when a new vista was opened up by the revolt of man against the age-long spiritual stagnation, it would not easily come out of the rut, because, religion had become a mental habit. As such, it persisted even long after it had ceased to be a spiritual necessity. That cultural and intellectual atavism was evidenced by the Reformation which appeared to eclipse the Renaissance.

Humanism, however, was not a still-born child. Having grown so luxuriantly in the congenial atmosphere of Italy, it naturally attracted the attention of free spirits in other parts of Europe. By the middle of the fifteenth century some German scholars, notably, Agricola and Reuchlin visited Italy, and carried the message of humanism across the Alps. "This efflorescence of Italy in time reacted on Germany. In consequence of the uninterrupted inter-

course with Italy, occasioned by ecclesiastical relations, the Germans soon discovered the superiority of the Italians; they themselves were despised by the disciples of the grammarians and rhetoricians of that country, and began to be ashamed of the rudeness of their spoken, and the poverty of their written language. It was not surprising, therefore, that young aspiring spirits at length determined to learn their Latin in Italy.....A man endowed with a peculiar talent necessary for appropriating to himself the classical learning of the age, then arose—Rudolphus Huysman of Groningen, called Agricola. His scholarship excited universal admiration; he was applauded in the schools as a Roman, a second Virgil."⁴

It is, however, not surprising that the message did not find any great response in the Universities of the Northern countries, though they had been the breeding ground of scholastic rationalism—that powerful solvent of ecclesiastical authority and religious orthodoxy. The anxiety to rationalise faith, to revitalise atrophied religious thought by injecting in its senile veins the serum of its original rationality, was wildly shocked by humanism, which struck at the very roots of religion. If in Italy, the University of Padua, as the centre of scholastic learning, resisted the Renaissance culture to the—bitter end, the Northern seats of traditional learning could not be any less conventional and conservative. France had become a centralised National State, which recognised Catholicism as the official religion and protected the Roman Church against schism and heterodoxy. The German Universities did not take kindly to the message of Humanism. They regarded it as a new form of Roman domination. "It was the importation of a foreign element, the setting up of an old enemy, the restoration of a world the Germans under Alaric and Theodoric had overthrown.....The pagan spirit, the impatience of Christianity, appears only in one or two Germans."⁵ And their keep thie convictions to themselves.

Nevertheless the spirit of the Renaissance could not be kept out of Germany. As a matter of fact, it preceded the Reformation and, in a way, prepared the ground for it. Erasmus represented the migration of humanism to the North, and he also heralded the Reformation in so far it was a revolt against the corruption of Church.

The invention of printing was Germany's contribution to the cause

of humanism. The Renaissance literature, imported from Italy by Rudolphus Agricola (1443-85), Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522), and Ulrich von-Hutten (1488-1523), could be made easily accessible to lay readers. Boycott by the Universities could no longer block the spread of the new leaning. The initial stage of the Renaissance in Germany culminated in the publishing of the works of Desiderius Erasmus. "Of all scholars who have popularised scholarly literature, Erasmus was the most brilliant, the man whose aims were the loftiest and who produced lasting effects over the widest area. His work was done, too, at the right moment for the North. A genial power was needed to thaw the frost-bound soil, and to prepare those fruits which each land was to bring forth in its own way."⁶

Erasmus has been described as the most typical European of all times, the flower of the Renaissance and the greatest of humanists. Opinions may differ in this respect. But Erasmus certainly personified more clearly and faithfully than any other man the most characteristic feature of the culture of his time, namely, the conflict between the dissatisfaction with the religious mode of thought, which drove the more courageous amongst men to fall back upon themselves and the lingering hope of the possibility of reforming religion so as to head off the catastrophe of the cultivated Europeans being cut adrift from all spiritual moorings. Erasmus is not counted among the great philosophers. He did not produce a system or speculative thought, but lived the noblest philosophy of life. He did not possess any poetical talent, and his artistic taste does not seem to have been of a very high level. He distinguished himself as the prophet of toleration and the populariser of humanist learning. He could be called the educator of his time. He was a master letter writer; personal correspondence was his main instrument for imparting ideas. He corresponded with Popes, Emperors, Kings, scholars and statesmen, all of whom held him in great esteem. His literary works were voluminous, covering a wide range of problems. Apart from the *Dialogues*, the book which truly reflected his spirit was a satire; *In Praise of Folly*.

Bearing the stamp of the typical Renaissance literature, such as the works of Pico della Mirandola, Lorenzo Valla, Poggio, Filelfo and others of their kind, the most popular book of Erasmus made the deepest impression and had a far-reaching influence on the culture and intellectual atmosphere of the time. "This little work brought together, with singular talent and brevity, matters which

had for some time been current and popular in the world, gave it a form which satisfied all the demands of taste and criticism, and fell in with the most decided tendency of the age. It produced an indescribable effect: twenty-seven editions appeared even during the life time of Erasmus; it was translated into all (European) languages, and greatly contributed to confirm the age in its anti-clerical dispositions."⁷

As a respectable publisher of conventional world classics would most probably exclude from the collected works of Erasmus, this epoch-making book, it is worthwhile to indicate its contents briefly. Even today, the book can be read with equal benefit. The object is to show to what extent folly dominates human life. Taking the idea from a popular fable, Folly is impersonated by a princess born in the Happy Islands, ruled by her father, nursed by Drunkenness and Rudeness; she becomes the mistress of a powerful kingdom to which all classes of men belong and she passes them all in review. The clergy receives her particular attention. She ridicules the men of God by observing that, though they have the largest share of her favour, they do not own their obligation. She pities the theologians for having lost themselves in the labyrinth of their fantasies, and taunts them for their Atlas-like efforts to hold up the Church, on their shoulders. Then she turns to the ignorance, the dirty physical habits, and the ludicrous pursuits of the monks and the barbarous style of their preaching. The Bishops come in for their due share, being chided for their lust for gold rather than solicitude for the souls of the faithful. The court of Rome and the Pope himself also receives her favour. Turning to the secular professions, Folly makes fun of national pride and professional conceit of all kinds. She concludes by declaring that without her the human race will die out. Who will marry without folly? Who can be happy without flattery and self-love? Yet, is not such happiness a folly? It is based on delusion. It is easier to imagine oneself a king than to be a king in reality. Those who are the nearest to brutes, being divest of the least vestige of reason, imagine themselves to be the happiest. This biting satire on every aspect of mediaeval life becomes even more pointed thanks to the drawings by Hans Holbein (c.1465-1524)—an outstanding figure of the Renaissance in Germany.

The fact that such a devastating exposure of the hypocrisy, foolishness and greed of contemporary society was so very widely

read, proved that the Renaissance appeared to lose its early exuberance in Italy because it was spreading over a much wider field. "The spiritual declension of Rome was the more important by reason of the new spirit of rationalism which was springing up in Northern Europe."⁸ In the latter half of the fifteenth century, a new life stirred in every department of human intelligence. Von Hutten exclaimed: "What an age! Learning flourishes, the mind of man awakes! It is a joy to be alive." The message was spread in England by Thomas More, in France by Rabelais, among many lesser lights although "it was believed that the Renaissance prepared the Reformation, that Luther only hatched the Erasmian egg."⁹ The men of the Northern Renaissance opposed Luther's intolerance and dogmatism, following Erasmus when they broke with the Reformation on the issue of free will. In that controversy, even Philip Melancthon whose position is second only to Martin Luther in the Lutheran Reformation, sided with Erasmus as against Luther whom he accused of fatalism. "In Northern countries, the Renaissance began later than in Italy, and soon became entangled with the Reformation. But there was a brief period and at the beginning of the sixteenth century, during which the new learning was being vigorously disseminated in France, England and Germany without having become involved in theological controversy."¹⁰

The factor which limited the spread of humanism in Italy was much stronger in Germany. The faith in the supernatural, conceived as the personal God of Christianity, held the popular mind spellbound. The educated were also preoccupied with theology. The great seats of learning were the scene of scholastic disputations about the nature of God and of soul and the relations between the two. The intellectual life was still very largely dominated by the religious mode of thought. There was opposition to the Papal theocracy and ecclesiastical privileges; there was also disgust with the corruption of the clergy and the Monastic Orders. But the revolt was not yet against religion—of man against God." The opposition was stronger and more defined than anything in Italy; but it was against Catholicism, not Christianity."¹¹ In that atmosphere, the secular, iconoclastic spirit of the Renaissance had to be subordinated to the striving for a reform of the ecclesiastical government and attempts to purge Christianity of clerical corruption. The Northern Renaissance "was much interested in applying standards

of scholarship to the Bible, and in obtaining a more accurate text than the Vulgate."¹²

Erasmus himself promoted that tendency. Like Rabelais, he preached unadulterated humanism, the revolt of man, through satire; but in other writings, he pleaded for reform of the Church, doctrinal purity and simplicity of faith. Most men of the Northern Renaissance thought in terms of retrieving the original purity of the Christian faith. Scholasticism had reinforced the rationalist foundation of religion, and the educated classes of Northern Europe had been greatly influenced by scholastic learning. Therefore, there religion could more successfully and for a longer period resist humanism, which appeared to be a chaotic, amoral if not actually immoral, outburst of the wilfulness of extravagant individuals against universal orderliness. "The Reformation began not in Italy, where the pagan spirit of the Renaissance predominated, but among the two peoples in which the religious sense was strongest."¹³ England could also be added to the category.

Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886) describes the Reformation as "an intellectual movement of a totally different kind."—different from the humanist movement led by Erasmus. It preached a rationalised Christianity which appeared to satisfy the spiritual cravings, intellectual demands and cultural necessities of the educated man of Northern and Central Europe.

Thanks to its foundation of primitive rationalism, religion in course of time indeed became a mental habit. Nevertheless, the religious mode of thought was not a stagnant pool; as thought, it also was subject to the law of the dynamics of ideas. Purity is the ideal of faith, and striving for that ideal, faith exhausts its possibilities of promoting spiritual development. Consistent faith, striving to regain pristine purity, therefore, is also a solvent of religion, the other being scepticism. To avoid that Nemesis of its logical outcome, religion necessarily institutionalises itself. Its original foundation of primitive rationalism is gradually buried deep under an elaborate superstructure of irrational doctrines, dogmas, rituals and mechanical practices prescribed by orthodoxy. Ultimately, the spirit of man, egged on by the urge for freedom and quest for knowledge, breaks out of the fetters of faith. To reform religion, therefore, is an idle dream. Religion cannot be really reformed. It must be institutionalised, and institutionalism implies concentration of power, its unavoidable abuse, restriction of free-

dom, and corruption. Once human mind has outgrown its infancy when spiritual needs could be satisfied by the native rationalism of primitive religion, faith in the supernatural, conceived either as many gods or one God or an impersonal Providence, places fetters on the possibility of human development. For the sake of further spiritual development—intellectual growth, moral uplift and cultural progress—they must be burst. That was the purpose of the Renaissance; therefore, it counterposed supernaturalism with humanism, claimed for man the power as well as the right to shape his own destiny, and proclaimed that a law-governed Universe did not preclude the freedom of human will. The Reformation, on the contrary, was a "religious movement the object of which, was to restore the purity of the revelation, and Germany undertook this mighty task," which by its very nature was impossible of accomplishment, although "various events concurred to give the direction to the mind of the country, and to incite a strenuous opposition to the See of Rome."¹⁴

The events which promoted the Reformation in Germany have already been reviewed. they were not peculiar to that country. And the strenuous opposition to the See of Rome soon lost its original concern for the purity of faith, and secular considerations became its motive force. The opposition to one form of institutionalised Christianity led to the rise of an alternative institutionalisation of religion. Faith was not purified; it became more sophisticated—as new system of doctrinal orthodoxy justified with pseudo-rationalism. "The Reformation and Counter-Reformation alike represent the rebellion of less civilised nations against the intellectual domination of Italy. In the case of the Reformation, the revolt was also political and theological; the authority of the Pope was rejected, and the tribute which he had obtained from the power of the keys (to the gates of Heaven) ceased to be paid. In the case of the Counter-Reformation, there was only revolt against the intellectual and moral freedom of Renaissance Italy."¹⁵

Although the Reformation led by Luther was very largely a theological dispute to cloak a mundane struggle for power, originally it developed on the background of a genuinely religious movement. The great heretics of the Middle Ages heralded the Reformation as well as the Renaissance. The immediate cause of the Reformation, however, was the revival of the Augustinian doctrine of Grace to combat Nominalist scholasticism which invoked

the authority of Thomas Aquinas. That was a genuine and disinterested theological controversy of the kind which had for several centuries been the ferment for the revival of classical learning. The fight against Thomist theology in defence of pure faith was led by Johann Ruchart von Wesel (d.1481) who called the Dominican Saint the "Prince of Errors." That was long before Luther. The genuinely religious tradition of the Reformation is to be traced farther back to Wycliff, whose teaching spread throughout central Europe in the middle of the fourteenth century. The Hussite rebellion in Bohemia and the subsequent heretical movements in Southern Germany inspired by Wycliff's (c.1329-1384) teachings. The European heretics advocated return to the purity and simplicity of the early Christian faith. Eventually, Luther appeared as the champion of the old cause. But that was only apparent. He was driven to that position by other considerations. "Luther and Calvin were not philosophers in search of a brief which could satisfy reason; they were theologians basing their doctrine upon their interpretation of the Scriptures.....they had no more desire for free examination—the freedom of each man to choose his own religion, than the Middle Ages had."

Nevertheless, the Reformation was the logical consequence of the whole history of Christianity. Its cause was rooted in that background. It was not adventitious; such as the rise of a new class. Theology could not completely eclipse the religious essence of Christianity. It was the individual's anxiety for salvation. After Christianity became institutionalised, every believer recognised the Church as the sole instrument for the attainment of salvation; but there were two ways—faith and religious practices. Which of the two was more strictly according to the true doctrine of Jesus? The crux of the question obviously was interpretation of the Scriptures. There was the traditional teaching of the Church. But even the Church did not prohibit individual believers to study the Sacred Books in which the divine revelation was directly expressed. St. Augustine, relying upon the Pauline Gospel, had laid down that only unquestioning faith in the merit of Christ was the way to salvation. But subsequently while not questioning the authority of Augustine, the Church attached greater importance to religious practices, particularly, the Sacrament. Ever since the tenth century, when the faith in the Millennium was exploded by experience, there had been devout Christians who claimed the right to go

directly to the Scriptures for satisfying themselves regarding the choice of the two alternative ways to salvation. They were condemned as heretics. They were the forerunners of Wycliff and Jan Huss (1373-1415). They were genuinely religious men, who wanted their belief to satisfy reason.

Irrespective of the theological and political motives of the movement subsequently led by him, there is no ground for doubting that originally Luther's position was purely religious. A neurathenic so as to have the Messiah complex, he felt the torment experienced by many individual Christian souls about the choice of the way to salvation. Early in his life, Luther seems to have found comfort in the pauline Gospel of unquestioning faith in the merit of Christ, elaborated by Augustine as the doctrine of salvation through Grace. But then adventitious circumstances intervened to drive Luther to a position where he appeared to out-Paul St. Paul.¹⁷

The logical implication of the Augustinian doctrine of salvation is to question the usefulness of institutionalised Christianity. If prescribed rituals were not essential for the attainment of salvation, a priesthood, an ecclesiastical government, and a clerical hierarchy were also superfluous. In the context of the historical background of the heretical tradition, and also due to the support of humanists of the Erasmian school, Luther was compelled to admit those far-reaching implications, once he took up the Augustinian position as against the Thomist. The reformation broke out as a revolt against Rome. As such, it was promptly taken under patronage by the German Princes aspiring for secular power and the German clergy envious of their Italian colleagues who occupied all the higher positions in the hierarchy.

Another implication of Luther's original religious position was the doctrine of predestination. Since religious practices and other meritorious works were of no avail as regards the salvation of the soul, its future must be predetermined by Providence. The logical corollary was denial of free will. On that issue, Erasmus and other humanists disowned the Reformation led by Luther. That was a break with the heretical tradition also, yet another reason for the Reformation to lose all religious significance and come under the secular influence of the German Princes. Ecclesiastically, the Reformation became a revolt of the German Church against Papal Universalism. It lost its original religious significance when it was

swamped by Luther's theological idea even arose that a Christian spirit of life would, by God's special ordinance, spread from the German nation over the whole world, as it did once from Judea."¹⁸

The Reformation was, indeed, a nationalist movement: but its driving force was not the rising bourgeoisie. The agelong struggle for power between the Pope and the German Emperor was carried on under the flag of a revolt against the Roman church. The newly elected Emperor, Charles V became its chosen leader. Luther was the propagandist and theologian of the would be autonomous German church. He and his associates appealed to the new Emperor to dismiss his clerical advisers and govern with the counsel of Princes and temporal electors, not to entrust public business to prelates and financiers, but to the nobles. Then he would have the voice of the nation: he would no longer need the benediction of the Pope and his Cardinals: on the contrary, they would require imperial confirmation. "Then will the strong German nation arise with body and goods, and go with Thee to Rome, and make all Italy subject to Thee; then wilt Thou be a mighty King."

That was hardly the voice of the rising bourgeoisie—the founder of modern Democracy. The German National State would be modelled after the mediaeval monarchy of the Ottos with the ambition to be a theocratic *Imperium*. Addressing the Diet of Worms (1495), convened symbolically on the day of the coronation of Charlemagne, the Emperor invoked the might of his mediaeval predecessors. "With the help of the monarchies, the powerful countries and the alliance which God had granted him, he hoped to raise it again to its ancient glory."¹⁹ The Lutheran German clergy—those angels in revolt—were welcomed by the ambitious young Emperor as God-sent allies in his coming struggle for temporal power.

According to its official historian, Ranke, the reformation was influenced by the constitution of the Holy Roman Empire and the German feudal State. Ever since Charlemagne was coronated by the Pope as the head of the resurrected temporal and spiritual power. The struggle was inherent in the constitution of the military-sacerdotal State called the Holy Roman Empire. The German Princes as the Electors of the Empire believed themselves to be occupying the position of the Roman Senators. Therefore, after the Pope and the Emperor, they were the most important factor in the constitution of the Empire. On the other hand, the clergy, mostly coming from Italy from the early days of the Empire,

constituted themselves into an autonomous corporation, a State within the State. The conflict between the lords, spiritual and temporal, continued.

Alarmed by the tendency of the clergy to usurp temporal power also, the founder of the Holy Empire reprimanded them for their ambition, and asked: How were they justified in interfering in secular affairs? What was meant by their renouncing the world? Whether or not that was consistent with large and costly retinues, with compelling the ignorant to make donations of their good? Whether or not it was better to foster good morals than to build Churches? These old questions were repeatedly asked throughout the succeeding centuries, and ultimately provided inspiration for the Reformation.

The questions implied the necessity for a revision of the constitution of the Empire. For a short period, under the three Ottos, the temporal lords gained the upper hand. German Popes were installed at the Vatican by Emperors who were Teutonic military chiefs. "The principle of the temporal government, autocracy, which from the earliest time had held in check the usurpation of ecclesiastical ambition, thus attained its culminating point, and was triumphantly asserted and recognised in the Empire."²⁰

But by the end of the eleventh century, the relation changed; the universal supremacy of the Vatican was firmly established. The Holy Roman Empire, for all practical purposes, became a theocracy. Without a revision of the constitution of the Empire, the *status quo* could not be changed. The revision required by the temporal lords was to make autocracy prevail upon theocracy. Therefore, when the ferment in the religious life of mediæval Europe ultimately broke out in Luther's revolt against the doctrine of Papal infallibility, the right of the Church to intervene in the relation between man and God, the power of the hierarchy and the privilege of the clergy, the temporal lords of Germany rushed to support it. Luther's famous theses proposed a revision of the constitution of the Empire, such as would free them from the fetters of Roman Universalism and Papal theocracy.

A proposal for the formal revision of the constitution of the Empire had been made at the Diet of Basel nearly a hundred years before by Nicholas Von Kus. Himself a Church dignitary, he maintained that it was impossible to reform the Church without revising the constitution of the Empire, because the two could not be

separated even in thought. On that ground, he demanded the emancipation of secular authority from ecclesiastical tutelage. He opposed the Pope's right to transfer the Empire from time to time to any man of his choice. Then, he proceeded to ascribe to the Empire a mystical relation with God and Christ, and absolute independence of the Church and even the right and duty of taking part in the ecclesiastical government. At the same time, he recommended constitutional checks and balances so as to limit the autocracy of the temporal power emancipated from the domination of the Church. But the temporal lords would not admit the least restriction of their power. The proposal of Von Kus fell through. A similar effort was made at the time of Emperor Maximilian, with no better result. However, the Diet of Worms of 1495 did adopt some measures calculated to bring about a political union of Germany while preserving the ancient military-sacerdotal structure of the Empire. But internal dissension amongst the Princes and between them and the Emperor could not be settled. Consequently, Papal predominance continued. Ultimately, the Reformation succeeded in setting up a rival Church with a new dogma, doctrinal authority and hierarchy, but not in revising the constitution of the Empire; nor could it reform the Roman Church. Luther and Calvin "did not want to break up the unity of the Universal Church. They claimed to reform it by bringing over all Christians to their Church, which they considered the only true one, the Church of the Pope being, in their eyes, the church of the Satan, those remaining in it would be damned."²¹

The dissatisfaction with the inadequacy and degeneration of institutionalised Christianity could not produce in Germany revolutionary and iconoclastic consequences as in Italy, because there even those who shared the feeling still thought in terms of religion, still looking for a belief which would satisfy reason.

Towards the close of the Middle Ages, Germany was not only the birthplace of printing; she was the home of a variety of arts and crafts which, on the one hand, brought into existence a numerous class of highly skilled urban workers, and on the other, a prosperous community of traders. Apart from the large army of anonymous architects and master-builders, who constructed the Gothic cathedrals and churches, there were organ-builders, wood carvers, bronze engravers, metal workers, sculptors and painters, whose brilliant craftsmanship made Germany of that time famous

throughout Europe. But in those days, individuals counted for nothing. Hundreds and thousands of creative workers, who produced imperishable objects of art as well as of ordinary usefulness, remained undifferentiated from families, communities and guilds. Only a few names even of great artists could emerge from the twilight of mediaeval collectivism and be recognised in history as creative individuals, such as Albrecht Durer (1471-1528), Peter Vischer (c.1455-1529) and Hans Holbein, and the last had to flee to England to win international reputation as a great painter.

During the latter part of the fifteenth century, Nuremberg was the Florence of Germany. It was a busy centre of trade and industry—a typical home of the rising bourgeoisie. As a centre of high finance, Augsburg also measured up with its Lombard rival. The powerful banking counter of the famous Fuggers, who held Emperors and Popes in heavy indebtedness, was situated there; yet, neither of the great mediaeval German towns offered patronage to art and literature; like in the rest of the country, there also the educated and wealthy people failed to outgrow the religious mentality. "With the coming of the Reformation, an ill wind began to blow upon the sculptors and painters. The swift onrush of religious and social anarchy turned the minds of the German people into other channels. Religion, not art, was the governing interest. It is significant that Holbein, finding Basel too uncomfortable for a German painter, fled to the shelter of the English Court."²²

Disowned by Erasmus and other Humanists, Lutheranism did not develop and spread as the ideology of the rising bourgeoisie; it won the patronage of the feudal Princes striving for secular power. When early in his career, Luther was proscribed both by the Pope and the Emperor, he was protected by the Elector of Saxony, who kept him in hiding for more than a year, during which time the doctrines of Protestantism were given the final shape. Originally motivated by the genuinely religious concern for the salvation of man's soul, the Reformation soon ceased to be a popular national movement. Otherwise, Germany would not be visited by the curse of the Thirty Years War, which threw her back two centuries in political and economic evolution. The reformed religion became closely associated with the princely order and depended entirely on its patronage. That is why Luther so very fiercely opposed the Peasant's Revolt which heralded the coming of the bourgeois revolution.

The ideals of early Christianity preached by the heretical movements and also by the nascent Reformation, naturally had a strong appeal for the peasantry. Early in his career, Luther himself taught that all were children of one Divine Father, and equally redeemed by the blood of Christ. The peasants who in the blessedness of their time-honoured ignorance were still sincerely religious, naturally believed in Luther's message of liberation, and concluded therefrom that "there should be no inequality of wealth or station". But Luther had in the meanwhile moved away from his original genuinely religious position, and the Reformation had become a political and theological movement. While Franz Von Sickingen (1481-1523) with his mediaeval knights sponsored the cause of the peasantry, moved by their naive religious faith, the ideological herald of the bourgeois revolution condemned the rebellion, provoked by his own religious teachings, "as contrary to the divine and evangelical law, and therefore to the German nation"—the pretenders to the succession of Israel as the chosen people of God.

Luther still professed to be the defender of the doctrine that the Gospel gave freedom to the soul, but now maintained that it did "not emancipate the body from restraint, or property from the control of laws....A pious Christian, he said should rather die a hundred deaths than give way one hair's breadth to the peasants demand. The government should have no mercy; the day of wrath and of the sword was coming; and their duty to their God obliged them to strike hard as long as they could move a limb; whoever perished in this service, was a martyr of Christ. Thus, he (Luther) supported the temporal order of things with the same interpidity that he had displayed in attacking the spiritual."²³

As a religious movement, the Reformation was democratic and libertarian. But it lost the original character when Luther degraded it to a doctrinal controversy of theology. His quarrel with the Pope "coincided with the appetites of secular Princes who cast covetous glances on the wealth of the Church."²⁴

The Reformation succeeded as negation of the time-honoured ideals and principles of the heretical movement, because, for Luther, though a fanatically religious man, religious thought was a stagnant pool, he did not believe in enquiry or toleration. He firmly held that the final truth on all problems of life was to be found in the Bible. Man was a helpless tool in the hands of God. He could do nothing to change his fate. Complete surrender to the mercy

of God, and faith in Grace as the reward of faith, alone could save man's soul despite his inherent wickedness. Luther denounced a humanist Pope, Leo X, as the "Anti-Christ", while he was the anti-Humanist *per excellence*. "It is not, therefore from Luther that the liberal and rationalising movement of European thought derived their origin.

Although the Protestant movement broke up into several sects, the anti-humanist essence of Lutheran Reformation became most evident in Calvinism. The "*Institution*" of the dictator of Geneva set forth the doctrines of the reformed religion: "If we contemplate man only in respect of his natural gifts, we find in him, from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet, no trace whatever of goodness.... Even the best things that rise out of us are always made infect and vicious by the uncleanness of the flesh, and are always mingled with dirt." The dogma of predestination inherent in Luther's unbalanced reading of the Gospel of St. Paul, and extravagant interpretation of Augustine's doctrine of Grace, became the basic article of faith in Calvin's reformed religion. From "all eternity", God has chosen the elect for salvation: the merit of the chosen few had nothing to do with the Grace of God. A man may appear to be the devil incarnate, yet he may be among those chosen for salvation. One would be inclined to think that this extravagance of religiosity was meant to exonerate Calvin's own wickedness which went to the extent of declaring, "if we (the chosen elect of God) leave man to his own devices, his soul is capable of naught but evil." Man should, therefore, have no liberty, no freedom of will, because he can only misuse the privilege. Calvin's reformed religion was the code of the prison house: every human being is primarily and perpetually inclined to evil, and therefore must be suspected *a priori* as a sinner and kept under strict supervision. "Wishing to elevate the divine as high as possible above the world, Calvin threw the worldly down into the lowest depth. Wishing to give supreme dignity to the idea of God, he degraded the idea of man."²⁵ For the humanists of his time, such as *Miguel Servetus* (1511-53), whom he sent to the stake, and *Sebastien Castellio* (1515-63), Calvin reserved epithets like "hissing serpents", "barking dogs", "Satan's spawn."

In the sixteenth century, Europe was infested, harassed and tormented by the inhumanity and violence of the reformed religion, while the cruelty of the Jesuistic Counter-Reformation brutalised

the flock still remaining faithful to the orthodox creed. The light of humanism, which shone so lustrously during the preceding century, appeared to have dimmed almost to extinction, if not altogether extinguished. In reality, that however was not the case. The fire of man's resurgence kept on burning beneath the surface of theological pedantry, spiritual abasement and wanton ignorance in general, which characterised the intellectual life of Europe during the years immediately following the Reformation. Neither Lutheranism nor Calvinism produced a single great thinker or scholar. Philip Melanchthon was the first and last to deserve the distinction. But he, as well as, Ulrich Zwingli began as humanists. Towards the end of their career, Melanchthon could not pull on well with Luther. He was repelled particularly by the latter's violent opposition to free will.

Like many cultivated young men of the time, Sebastian Castellio was attracted by what appeared to be Calvin's Stoic morality. One of the later humanists, he was soon disillusioned and mercilessly persecuted by the zealot of Geneva. Sebastien Castello's "*Manifesto on Behalf of Toleration*", issued in 1551 to protest against "Calvin's murder of Servetus", was a stirring humanist document. Levelling against Calvin the deadly charge that by sending Servetus to the stakes he gave a lie to Luther's declaration that the Reformation stood for the "freedom of the Christian man", Castello wrote: "To seek truth and to utter what one believes to be true, can never be a crime. No one must be forced to accept a conviction. Conviction is free".

The foundation of the Jesuistic order by Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556) indicated that the spirit of the Renaissance had pervaded the whole of Europe. It was apprehended by the Pope and his hierarchy that the experience of the Reformation having demonstrated the impossibility of reforming religion, of a return to the purity and simplicity of the original Christian faith, unbelief and despair would spread far and wide, preparing the intellectual atmosphere for a new spurt of humanism. The "atheistic and epicurean" view of life could not be stamped out. During the period Europe was dazed by the revolt of the angels and its equally spectacular debacle, humanism only marked time, all along undermining the spiritual foundation of the mediaeval society and Christian culture. It penetrated the educational institutions to infect the mind of the youth. It was not for nothing that Erasmus became

the teacher of the sixteenth century.

The men of the Renaissance brought learning out of the cloisters and Universities. Even the Universities were academic cloisters, because, there too, education was not secularised: they remained associated with, and were very largely dominated by, theology which, recognised as the highest of sciences even by Roger Bacon, had ever since retained that pre-eminence. A new system of imparting humanist education was devised early in the fifteenth century by Vittorino da Feltre. Secular schools were founded not only to turn out lay scholars, but also all-round citizens. The new system of education was based on the Greek idea of a harmonious development of mind and body. The men of the Renaissance had won the undeserved reputation of being immoral or, at any rate, insensible to the traditional codes of morality, because of their decisive rejection of the Christian ascetic notion of "our vile bodies". Not ashamed of their bodies, they were as much concerned with the cultivation of mind as with their physical life. That is why painting and sculpture reached with them such a sublime eminence. Careful observation and study of the human body for its symmetry and beauty, with reverence and affection, was the essential condition for the afflorescence of the Renaissance art. The rejection of conventional ethical notions led to the creation of new aesthetic values. The humanist system of education spread throughout Europe, thanks to the services of men like Erasmus. "The Italian Renaissance brought forth no fairer proof, and none fraught with more important consequences for the liberal culture of the world than the school training based on the ideas of Humanism, which took shape at that period."²⁶ "They first conceived and framed the education that has now prevailed through Europe for four centuries, moulding the youth of diverse nations by one common discipline, and establishing an intellectual concord for all peoples."²⁷

Ignatius of Loyola's eyes detected the danger of the humanist education, which was setting up a new standard of values and creating new values, it was fostering the spirit of enquiry, encouraging scepticism, attaching greater importance to secular learning than to theology, and teaching the subordination of dogma to reason. The Jesuistic order under Loyola's leadership planned to combat the insidious spread of humanism by organising educational institutions. It was going to be a determined struggle with the humanist teachers for the soul of the European youth. An

extremely sagacious man, working on a long-term plan, Loyola preferred to swim with the current. Excellent education was imparted in the schools and colleges founded by the "Spanish Father". In addition to the classical languages, science was also taught, with the result that Loyola's means defeated his end. Jesuit schools greatly helped the spread of modern education, including the rapidly growing scientific knowledge. Having in a short time gained the reputation of able teachers, Jesuit Fathers were invited to fill up chairs in the old Universities.

At the same time, the most powerful solvent of the religious mode of thought was in operation. Paracelsus (1493-1541) followed Copernicus, and half a century before the latter, Nicolaus Cusanus had arrived at the conclusion that the earth was a sphere rotating on its own axis. Tycho Brahe's (1546-1601) *Rudolphine Tables* contributed greatly to the rise of astronomy. Galileo and Kepler had been conducting their studies during the closing decades of the barren sixteenth century. Zacharias Jansen (Late 16th and early 17th century) invented the microscope; van Helmont (1577-1644) conducted the study of nature; and William Gilbert (1540-1603) discovered electric friction and the earth's magnetism. The century closed with the martyrdom of Giordano Bruno.

The intellectual life, which distinguished the seventeenth century as the beginning of the modern age, was stirring in the womb of the sixteenth, notwithstanding the later's apparent spiritual exhaustion. The discovery of nature by science enabled man to dispense with the necessity of assuming or postulating supernatural powers and thus evolving a religious faith to satisfy reason. The dawning knowledge about the mechanism of the observed natural and physical processes (the movement of celestial bodies and the swing of the pendulum) lifted at least a corner of the veil of mystery shrouding the universal order. Man began to feel that after all he might not be a helpless puppet in the hand of an inscrutable Providence. The experience of the power to know what lay behind the veil of the mysteries of nature awakened in him the feeling of power to do what until then was believed to be beyond human ability. The recollection of the achievements of an Archimedes and the fresh memory of the soaring vision of Leonardo da Vinci encouraged the conviction that, with an increasing knowledge about the mechanism of nature, man would acquire the power to control the forces of nature. A new vista opened up before man's creative

genius. He could not only create imperishable artistic and literary treasures, but also might dream, as Leonardo did, of mastering the mechanism of nature and eventually recreating the world to his liking. For the first time in his history, man, inspired with the creative spirit of the Renaissance, and the vision of power to be born of expanding scientific knowledge, felt himself in harmony with the grandiose conception of a law-governed Universe, because it no longer reduced him to an insignificant, helpless, cog in the remorseless wheel of fate, which was to be accepted as the grace of an insensible God. That sublime feeling of creative power was, indeed, still limited to a few, but those few were blazing a trail out of a dark past and a dull present towards a future full of hope and promise.

The debacle of the revolt of the angels marked the end of the age of faith in the history of European humanity. It justified the revolt of man. It revealed the necessity more pointed than ever before. The choice was between God and man. Religion could not be reformed. The coveted return to the purity and simplicity of primitive faith, born of the frustrated rationality of *homo sapiens*, turned out to be an unattainable ideal. To hold its sway in a complicated society, any religion must be institutionalised, and the doctrines and dogmas of an organised institutionalised religion could not have the charm and spell of a simple faith which once satisfied the embryonic reason of primitive man. Religion, therefore, could no longer elevate man above the selfishness, vulgarity and ugliness of life to the beatitude of an imaginary communion with God. It only debased and degraded man either to a slave of the priest or an abject believer in predestination, a helpless reed tossed in the uncharted sea of fate dictated by the arbitrariness of an inscrutable providence. The alternative for man was to revolt, to throw off the tutelage of God, stand on his own feet, take destiny in his own hands.

The Renaissance had blazed that trail of spiritual revolt. The reformation dissolved the decayed Christian Universal Order. The ultimate defeat of God's agents on earth in the struggle for the monopoly of temporal power, encouraged man's striving for spiritual freedom. The Holy Empire was broken up into National States: and there was a parallel development of immensely greater historical significance. Ecclesiastical laws were replaced by secular laws, made by men. God's government on earth was super-

ceded by governments of men. On the breakdown of the time-honoured religious order, a moral order, with no theological or supernatural sanction, became the ideal of man. The striving for the attainment of that new ideal was the motive force of the intellectual efforts, social conquests and cultural achievements of the following two centuries.

NOTES

1. Charles Seignobos, *The Rise of European Civilisation*.
2. Ranke, *History of the Reformation in Germany*.
3. Villari, *Life and Times of Girolamo Savonarola*.
4. Ranke, *History of the Reformation*.
5. Lord Acton, *Lectures on Modern History*.
6. *Cambridge Modern History*.
7. Ranke, *History of the Reformation*.
8. Fisher, *History of Europe*.
9. Lord Acton, *Lectures on Modern History*.
10. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*.
11. Lord Acton, *Lectures on Modern History*.
12. Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*.
13. Seignobos, *The Rise of European Civilisation*.
14. Ranke, *History of the Reformation*.
15. Rusell, *History of Western Philosophy*.
16. Seignobos, *The Rise of European Civilisation*.
17. See Mathew Arnold, *St. Paul and Protestantism*.
18. Ranke, *History of the Reformation*.
19. Ranke, *History of the Reformation*.
20. Ranke, *History of the Reformation*.
21. Seignobos, *The Rise of European Civilisation*.
22. Fisher, *History of Europe*.
23. Ranke, *History of the Reformation*.
24. Fisher, *History of Europe*.
25. Stefan Zweig, *The Right of Heresy*.
26. *Cambridge Modern History*.
27. J.A. Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy*.

Chapter VI

THE NATURAL LAW

The intellectual stagnation of the period immediately following upon the Reformation was more apparent than real. Luther's violence and Calvin's bigotry had repelled sensitive souls from the time-honoured theological studies, which were until then regarded as the foremost intellectual pursuit. The latter part of the sixteenth century was indeed conspicuous for the absence of any outstanding work of literature or fine art. But at the same time, science advanced silently, ushering in a new era of intellectual achievements. Before the century was out, heliocentric astronomy was definitely established as a landmark in the history of thought. Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, Kepler, Galileo—all those founders of modern science lived in the sixteenth century. Early in the next century (1608), Johann Lippershey, a Dutch optician, manufactured the first binocular telescope. Galileo quickly saw the great importance of the new instrument, and himself manufactured a better one. Though still very primitive, it enabled him to survey the heavens and discover phenomena of celestial movement which placed the new science of heliocentric astronomy on a solid foundation. Philosophically, Galileo's discovery had a staggering effect; it shook the tradition of Aristotle's authority. In his famous books, *A Dialogue of the Two systems of the World*, which caused imprisonment of the aged savant until death, he expounded the heliocentric view so very cogently that the Aristotelian philosopher "Simoplico", who defended Ptolemaic geocentrism, was made to look like a fool. Galileo thus not only established modern astronomy; but also laid the foundation of modern physics to be elaborated by Descartes and Newton.

The significance of the discovery of America was soon followed by Magellan's circumnavigation of the globe, which empirically proved that the earth is round. Another death-blow to the Biblical

mythology. It naturally had a repercussion on the awe-inspiring structure of theology which for centuries had claimed to be the queen of sciences. Finally, there was the far-reaching revolutionary effect of the invention of printing by 'Gutenberg' early in the fifteenth century. Having overcome the initial technical difficulties, the art of printing spread throughout Europe as the most effective medium for the dissemination of learning and knowledge. By the sixteenth century, printing of books in large numbers had become a regular industry in all the civilised countries of Europe.

The advance of science laid the foundation of a mechanistic cosmology, which was the *conditio sine qua non* of liberating human mind from the tradition of the religious mode of thought. The art of printing was instrumental in carrying the message of freedom far and wide. The new intellectual upsurge, therefore, did not remain limited to cloisters and universities. A large section of European humanity, practically the entire literate laity was caught in the new current. Consequently, the time-honoured belief in a theological order of the Universe was shaken, and the cultural atmosphere became congenial for a new intellectual outlook—the conception of a world order governed by Natural Law.

Meanwhile, the humanist education had been spreading, with the result that the cultivated man's mind was becoming more receptive to iconoclastic scientific knowledge and responsive to its liberating appeal. "The sense of human dignity was the chief moral agent of antiquity, and sense of sin of mediaevalism.... It was not till the revival of learning had been considerably advanced, that a perception of the nobility of the heroic character dawned upon man's mind. Then, for the first time, the ecclesiastic type was obscured, a new standard and aspiration appeared, and popular enthusiasm taking a new direction achieved that political liberty which, once created, intensified the tendency that produced it."¹

The new era was ushered in by a new type of men, no longer concerned with the baffling mystery of man's relation with God, but with secular affairs. They approached the problems of human existence no longer from the theological, but from a rational and moral point of view. Having quietly set aside the fiction of a divine Providence, or supernatural sanction, they looked for a secular authority for the conduct and governance of human affairs. For centuries previously, leaders of thought had been preoccupied with the problem of man's relation with God and the salvation of his

soul; they claimed to solve the mystery of how a spiritual power intervened in terrestrial matters, and the competence to legislate for the government of God. The intellectual leaders, who ushered in the new era, were concerned with the secular problem of harmonising human relations. They conceived the task of the time as follows: "We have now to find human authority promoting intellectual advancement, and accepting as its maxim that the lot of man will be ameliorated and his power and dignity increased, in proportion as he is able to comprehend the mechanism of the world, the action of natural laws, and to apply physical forces to his use."²

The secularisation of politics was the outstanding feature of the new age. Political theories and economic doctrines were dissociated from theological preoccupation and freed from ecclesiastical supremacy. The former were formulated on the basis of terrestrial sanctions, and the latter developed with a view to enhancing human welfare. Politics was secularised by repudiating the mediaeval doctrine of the divine right of kings. The conception of the Natural Law and the hypothesis of a social contract provided the new sanction for secular authorities—of political administration and universalism of the Roman Church: the parallel process was the practical disappearance of the Holy Roman Empire. Since the time of Charlemagne, the Pope and the Emperor were the dual heads of a theocratic State—the would-be Christian World Order. After six hundred years of a continuous struggle for supremacy, both the powers, the temporal of the Emperor as well as the spiritual of the Pope, were reduced to a shadowy existence. The establishment of sovereign National States in England, France and subsequently in other countries had already put an end to the pretension of the Emperor. The Reformation laid low the Universalism of the Roman Church, and still further disrupted even the formal status of the Holy Roman Empire. The Middle Age of the Christian theocratic order was at its end. It had to give place to a new order in which science was to supercede faith; man-made laws and terrestrial considerations were to regulate the inter-relations of secular political communities and also of their citizens.

A new type of men—sceptics, critics, out-and-out atheists, avowed materialists, such as Jean Bodin (1530-1596), Montaigne (153-1592), Descartes (1596-1650), Bayle (1647-1706), Pierre Gas-sendi (1588-1679), Hobbes (1592-1655), Francis Bacon (1561-1626)—

shouldered their way to the forefront of European history until then crowded with priests, prelates, Popes and princes. The apparent intellectual stagnation of the sixteenth century was broken by a flood-tide of spiritual exuberance. The intellectual and cultural structure of the mediaeval society collapsed under the critical onslaught, particularly of three men, each wielding a different weapon. Montaigne's scepticism surveyed the surrounding institutional patterns and examined the variety of traditional opinions from the point of view of the sophisticated man of the world, who was not to be taken in by time-honoured facades nor fall for fetishes. Rather superficial. Montaigne's criticism was nonetheless devastating, because it appealed to the ordinary intelligence. Descartes laid the axe of his critique at the roots of theology, which had for centuries kept the cultivated mind spell-bound, and ravished rationalism. The Cartesian method threw all venerable notions into the crucible of scepticism which dissolved everything except the confidence in one's own judgment guided by self-evident empirical truths. Descartes provided humanism with a sound philosophical foundation. Bayle's was the scepticism of a scholar. Often showing a Voltairean scintillation, he did not stop short of cynicism. Although always with the dignity of scholarliness, Bayle, the sceptic, was the founder of modern criticism. His was the deadly art of arguing out old systems of thought with the object of laying bare their logical fallacies and to expose their absurdities. Before the threefold assault, mediaevalism lay in ruins—the religious mode of thought torn asunder from its moorings of blind faith, rationalism ashamed of its illicit love with the mystic and obscurantist theology, classicism exposed as barren learning and cultural artificiality. The intellectual atmosphere was clear for creative minds to breathe in freely, to formulate new principles of law, to evolve new political theories, to visualise new ideals of social evolution, and to conceive of new cultural patterns. The revolt of man against the Frankensteinian monster of religion and teleological order, created by his infantile rationalism, and the revival of science giving him the sense of creative power born of knowledge, ushered in the modern civilisation with incalculable potentialities, of good and evil, to unfold during the succeeding centuries.

The publication in 1625 of *The Law of War and Peace* by Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) has been described as the beginning of the epoch of the modern political system of Europe. At the close of

the Middle Ages, Europe was in a state of lawlessness; it was a war of all against all. The military-sacerdotal order founded by Charlemagne having disintegrated owing to its internal discord, there was no recognised authority except of violence, fanaticism and orthodoxy. The laws of the ecclesiastical government had lost authority with all who claimed the freedom of conscience and the right of individual judgement. The laws of the Empire were there only to be flouted by all who dared. Coming out of the decayed mediaeval order, Renaissance Europe needed a new system of law with a rational secular and moral sanction. The work of Grotius satisfied the need. The new sanction was found in the old notion of the Natural Law. It appealed to the Protestants and Catholics alike. The latter, on the authority of Thomas Aquinas, regarded the Natural law as the "unrevealed law of God": the Protestants would not accept that authority, but they were respectful to the positivism of the Roman Jurists who also appealed to the Law of Nature. The work of Grotius obtained "the enthusiastic assent of Europe,"³ because it laid "the foundations of moral and legal justice, which learned men would deem sound and men of the world would not think fantastic."⁴ Grotius was a humanist of scholastic learning. As such, he could produce a treatise on law which won the approbation of the philosophically inclined ecclesiastical Jurists, and also of the Renaissance lawyers who drew inspiration from the tradition of Cicero.

All through the Middle Ages, law was referred to a divine origin. In the late sixteenth century, there was a profound change in the conception of law in consequence of the importance attached to human personality. Far-reaching conclusions flowed from the dignity and autonomy attributed to every human being. "Several conclusions are directly derived from this assumption. It explains the claim which the individual makes, and the duty which he admits, that Reason should be acknowledged to be the Natural—which is also to say, the Divine—Law. Again, it provides for foundation of all human legal institutions, which thus become directly identical, in the last analysis, with moral principles. Finally, it furnishes the ideal of a single organisation or a society of mankind."⁵

In consequence of that profound change, the old conception of Natural Law was freed from the authority of God, and referred to human reason. Grotius developed that new conception of Natural law. He defined it as "a dictate of Right Reason which points

out that an act to the extent it is not or is in conformity with rational nature, has in it a quality of moral baseness or moral necessity; and that, in consequence, such an act is either forbidden or enjoined by the author of nature, God."⁶

In short, the Advocate-General of the Netherlands outlined a system of law which, based upon the entire experience of the past, incorporating its positive outcome, met the requirements of the new situation. Grotius was a Protestant. But he was also a colleague of Erasmus, and with the latter had been repelled by the Reformation, "believing that, all things considered, it had done more harm than good."⁷ Experience had proved that the Church could not be reformed, that progressive ideas and movements must transcend the limits of the religious mode of thought. Grotius lived when all thoughtful men "asked what was the difference between the vindictiveness with which Rome dealt (with dissenters) and the rancour of Calvin who seized Servetus and committed him to the flames... There was not a pious or thoughtful man in all reformed Europe who was not shocked when the circumstances under which the unhappy physician had been brought to the stake were made known."⁸

Grotius was a man of the Renaissance—one of those who cultivated the humanist spirit and spread humanist learning when Europe appeared to be in a state of intellectual stagnation. At the same time, he represented the positive aspect of the Reformation—the revolt against authority and assertion of the claim to personal enquiry and judgment. Unity is antagonistic to liberty. The Universalism of the Catholic Church meant spiritual slavery for the individual believer. By disrupting that monolithic structure of the individual believer, by disrupting that monolithic structure of institutionalised religion, the Reformation served the cause of spiritual freedom, even though it advanced an alternative totalitarianism. But once the spell of religious unity was broken, it could not be re-established. Protestantism triumphed in the emergence of numerous sects which could not justify their fissiparous existence without admitting the right of criticism and freedom of conscience. The disappearance of a coercive unity promoted the cause of liberty. That was the positive significance of the Reformation. Grotius was one of the humanists who knew how to appreciate that legacy.

The conception of the Natural Law was a landmark in the his-

tory of man's struggle for freedom. It liberated him from faith in the supernatural—a power which he can never comprehend nor overcome, because it is imaginary; on the other hand, the Natural Law belongs to his world; therefore, eventually, he will be able to understand how it operates, and consequently live in harmony with it. The notion of the Natural Law is empirically derived; there is nothing mysterious about it. The regularities of nature are the facts of man's experience. The notion of Natural Law, therefore, results from the innate rationality of man. Religion also originated in that notion. In course of man's intellectual development, it appeared in different forms. It is a human heritage and as such, enriched by expanding scientific knowledge, entered into the structure of the ideological foundation of modern civilisation.

The notion of the Natural Law became the guiding principle of the intellectual life which ushered in the age of modern civilisation, because it had originated with the fathers of science and philosophy—the naturalist thinkers of ancient Greece. The revival of science naturally revived the idea which was the point of departure of the earliest enquiry into the causes of natural phenomena and, therefore, of philosophical thought. In Greek mythology and epics, Fate or Destiny was of greater importance than the gods—the latter being subject to the former. Neither was Fate; a super-divine force nor were the gods supernatural. Nature was the ultimate reality: nothing existed beyond and outside it. The gods themselves were subject to the law of nature, "Fate exercised a great influence in all Greek thought, and perhaps was one of the sources from which science derived the belief in natural law."⁹

The notion of fate was the primitive conception of determinism—that nature was not a chaotic combination of diverse and conflicting phenomena, nor was it subject to any arbitrary supernatural Providence: it was a law-governed system. Thales, Anaximander, Heraclitus and other naturalist thinkers assumed that everything came out of one single primal substance, which was infinite and eternal. They conceived the basic substance differently; Thales as water, Heraclitus as fire, so on and so forth. But all of them held that the original substance differentiated itself into the multifarious substances of experience, these were transformed into each other, and again all merged in their common source. This process of the being and becoming of the world was believed to be due to the operation of the Law of Nature, which appeared as the

concept of "Justice" in ancient Greek thought. Justice was conceived as keeping balance—in every sphere of existence. To be just was to be in harmony with the Law of Nature. Justice was identical also with virtue. Ethics was deduced from Physics, because man was a part of nature.

This highly interesting philosophical idea was elaborated subsequently by Epicurus. It has still to be fully grasped by the philosophy of our time. However, the point is that the notion of the Natural Law represented the belief in physical determinism; it was reason in nature, and also the fundamental moral category: "but this supreme power was not itself *personal*, and was not a supreme god."¹⁰ The profound philosophical implication of the concept of Natural Law had been developed by Aristotle and the Stoics, apart from the Epicureans.

Treating the concept of Natural law as "Justice", Aristotle came to the conclusion that it was a necessary element of the State; but he differentiated "conventional justice" from "natural justice". While the former, guided by reason and convenience, laid down definite rules, the latter's authority was independent of civilised life. Evidently, according to Aristotle, the concept of Natural Law in the philosophical sense implied that there was a rational design in nature, and that man-made laws, together with the rest of human behaviour, should conform with that rational design. That is how justice and virtue could be realised in life.

The idea of Natural law was further elaborated by the Stoics into an ethical system; they derived morality from rationality, which was referred back to the Law of Nature. They maintained: "Every creature has its own nature and its own appropriate functions, and for man—whose nature is to be citizen—the Law of Nature is the sum of the principles, founded in human nature, which determine the conduct befitting him in his rational and social quality."¹¹ The Stoics further held that, by nature, all men were free and equal. The Law of Nature was supreme and eternal, therefore precedent of all enactments of any human authority. Even religion connoted obedience to the all-pervading Reason, which was the Law of Nature. Roman Jurists since the time of Cicero based their doctrines on the Stoic concept of the Natural Law. Cicero declared that the Roman Republic had approximated the Stoic ideal of the "Natural State" and the laws of the Republic were in full harmony with the Law of Nature.

The concept of the Natural Law ceased to be a matter of philosophical speculation. It became the metaphysical sanction of legislation and the State derived its moral authority therefrom. It was in this sense that Natural law became the point of departure of political theories at the close of the Middle Ages. The Roman Jurists modified the original Greek version in order to harmonise it with the established sociopolitical order. The Stoics held that equality and freedom were the essence of Natural law; the Roman lawyers dropped the idea of equality and declared that all men were free before the Law of Nature. Nevertheless, both the versions of the venerable principle were known throughout the Middle Ages. Not only were the heretical movements inspired by the doctrine that equality and freedom were of the essence of the Natural Law, it was endorsed by the early Church Fathers also. St. Ambrose (c.339-397), for example, defended the original Greek conception as against the interpretation by the Roman lawyers. He declared that "private property is not an institution of nature. Nature knows only common property: she gave all things to all men. Usurpation and greed created the law of private property." That was an echo of Cicero's voice raised several centuries ago: "Nations and princes may make laws, but they are without the true character of law if they are not derived from the original source of law, which existed before the State was established. Private property is unknown to nature."¹² Again, "There is a law which is identical with true reason, and which is in harmony with nature. It is eternal and unchallengeable and is the expression and the command of the divine authority."¹³

As a matter of fact, the entire Christian theology, until it had to compromise with the positive (man-made) law of the Roman Empire, was based upon the doctrine of Natural Law. First, there was the Golden Age (the State of Nature); the fall of man was followed by a moral crisis—the vale of tears and life of sin, to last for a millennium; redemption was to come thereafter; the Natural Law operating as the Law of Reason, would enable man to overcome the moral crisis and return to Grace. The law of Reason was to restrain the evils in man. But in course of time, it was reinforced by the Canon Laws of the ecclesiastical government compiled in the sixth century by St. Isidore of Sevilla (c.560-636). These also claimed the sanction of the Natural Law, which was recognised in the theology of the Roman State religion as the "Unrevealed Law

of God." Finally, came the Positive Law (Roman Law) to justify the actual conditions of life, which were so very different from the Biblical picture of the world waiting for redemption after the millennium.

The purpose of the Positive Law was to protect the poor against the rich, the weak against the strong. It legalised private property, but offered protection to the weak and the poor. It proposed to prevent the war of all against all, and to protect the fruits of labour against robbery. According to the Roman Jurists, the State was created for the benefit of all. They declared that nobody should have a superfluity so long as there were men who lacked the most necessary things. Such a system of law, even if made by man, could legitimately claim the sanction of the Law of Nature conceived by the early Greek philosophers as "Justice," and subsequently, by the Stoics, as connoting equality and freedom. Owing to its obvious justness and equity, the Roman Law came to be an important element of the cultural heritage of Europe, ultimately to provide the fathers of modern political theories with a sound point of departure.

When Christianity became the State religion of the Roman Empire, and the latter established a terrestrial order in place of the chaos created by the fall of the antique civilisation, the Biblical faith in the Millennium was abandoned imperceptibly by the Fathers of the Church. Instead of nearing the predestined end, the world appeared to be showing unmistakable signs of a much longer life: consequently, the pessimistic view, born out of the chaotic conditions of a social crisis, had to be adjusted to the altered perspective. It became necessary to find a compromise between the Natural Law and the Positive Law given for the administration of the affairs of the world, which did not seem to be moving towards an early end. St. Ambrose himself qualified his views quoted above by the following proviso: "But it does not follow from this that private property is a bad thing: the doctrine of Natural Law only requires that the rich should support the poor with a portion of the goods which were originally the common possession of all." And the Prince of the patristic literature, St. Augustine, defended the Positive Law enacted for the administration of worldly affairs against the criticism of the Manichaeists—those unmitigated votaries of the early Christian other-worldliness. "Private property in itself is not an evil, but the evil lay in passionate

chase after riches, the accumulation of property, the elevation of material possessions over truth, justice, wisdom, faith, love of God and man, or even placing property on the same level as these ideal virtues."¹⁴ The historical significance of the defence of Positive Law on the authority of the Natural Law, conceived later as the "Unrevealed Law of God," is fully appreciated when it is remembered that 1,500 years later the prophet of modern Communism rejected the doctrine that "private property is theft" and wrote a whole book to criticise the *Philosophie de la Misere* as *Poverty of Philosophy*.

Nevertheless, doubt about the inter-relation of the Natural Law, the Canon Law and the Positive Law, continued to confuse scholasticism until the thirteenth century, when the great twelfth century jurist Gratian, known as the father of canon law, cleared away the contradictions of the work of his predecessor, St. Isidore of Seville (c.560-636). The latter had given a misleading definition of the Natural Law by mixing up the original Greek version and the interpretation of the Roman Jurists. Gratian took up what today could be calloed a Marxist position, so many centuries before Hegel provided his pupil with the dialectics of historicism. The mediaeval dialectician held that "private property is sinful, but necessary: therefore, ownership should be restricted to what is necessary." That was certainly an improvement on Hegelian Positivism, which dominates the revolutionary social philosophy of our time: according to the Hegelian formula, taken over in Marxism, the third term of the syllogism should have been, "therefore, private property is good", because whatever is necessary, is justifiable, and therefore good.

The conception of the Natural Law had survived the vicissitudes of the Roman Empire; but in the meantime, Christian theology had outgrown the Hellenistic inclination of the early Church Fathers. The appeal to Reason, unsupported by authority, no longer carried conviction. But on the other hand, the study of Aristotle had become an important part of scholastic learning. The authority of "the philosopher" and also of Cicero had added importance to the concept of the Natural Law. It had, therefore, to be fitted into the system of Christian faith. Gratian was an ecclesiast; but a greater authority than that of a casuist was called for. St. Thomas Aquinas declared that the Natural Law was the "unrevealed Law of God," and as such immutable, and supreme over all other law. With the endorsement of the rationalist Occam, the Thomist defi-

dition of the Natural Law become an important factor of mediaeval thought, subsequently to become the point of departure of modern political theories. As a matter of fact, the sanction for the doctrine of the sacred right of revolt can be found in St. Thomas Aquinas, who categorically asserted "the right of subjects to withhold their obedience from rulers who were usurpers and unjust."¹⁵

Grotius reared his legal system for a new political order on the foundation of the tradition of the ancient and mediaeval thought about the origin of human rights and the source of laws to guard them. "The doctrine of natural right, as it appears in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is a revival of Stoic doctrine, though with important modifications. It was the Stoics who distinguished *jus naturale* from *jus gentium*. Natural Law was derived from the first principles of the kind held to underlie all general knowledge. By nature, the Stoics held, all human beings are equal... Christianity took over this part of Stoic teaching along with much of the rest. And when at last, in the seventeenth century, the opportunity came to combat despotism effectively, the Stoic doctrines of Natural Law and natural equality, in their Christian dress, acquired a political force which, in antiquity, not even an Emperor could give them."¹⁶ Marcus Aurelius (121-180) was the Emperor who tried unsuccessfully to enforce equal right and equal freedom according to the doctrine of the Natural Law.

At this point, some digression is warranted to examine the social background of Grotius. Did he not formulate the new theory of law to justify the rise of the bourgeois Dutch Republic? There is no evidence to show that the writing of his *Law of War and Peace* had any direct connection with that dramatic event. And even if that was the case, it would be pointless to emphasise it. Because, the role of the trading and industrial classes in the revolt of the Spanish Provinces of the Netherlands was insignificant. The Dutch Republic was not a creation of the bourgeoisie.

Originally, the revolt was not against the Spanish rule. When King Philip II left Flanders for Spain in 1551, the Government of the Netherlands was delegated to the Duchess of Parma, a natural daughter of Emperor Charles V by a Flemish mistress. She would have been accepted as a legitimate ruler, had the native nobility been allowed to conduct the government. That wise course was not adopted. A Council of three, headed by Cardinal Granvelle was appointed to rule on behalf of the King. The native nobi-

lity felt deprived of their natural right to rule, and revolted not against the Spanish King, but against the Granvelle camarilla. The rising bourgeoisie had nothing to do with that event, which led to the rise of the Dutch Republic. "Proud and wealthy native noblemen, who had served the State under Charles V, asked themselves how long these outrages were to be endured, and when they were to be admitted to a legitimate share in the influence and the spoils of government, from which they were excluded by the unpopular Cardinal and his associates."¹⁷ That was not a new class beginning the struggle for political power. The revolt was led by Egmont, a professional soldier, the Count of Hoorn, and William Nassau, Prince of Orange—"the three men who, in the recent troubles, had most helped the maintenance of order."¹⁸

Additional causes of the revolt were the anti-heresy edicts and the order that the people of the Netherlands should accept the Tridentine creed of the Council of Trent (1545-63). With a solemn protest against religious persecution, drawn up by the Prince of Orange, Egmont personally went to see the King. On the failure of his mission, young noblemen, bigotted Calvinists like Philip Marnix (1540-1598), and humane Catholics like Brederode, joined the revolt. The flame was fanned into a widespread conflagration when Egmont and Hoorn, taken prisoner by treachery, were publicly beheaded. But not until a tax was imposed to pay Alva's troops did the commercial community join the revolt. After the foundation of the Dutch Republic in 1572, with a democratic Constitution, the trading and industrial classes tightened up their purse-strings. The Republican army of the Prince of Orange suffered defeat after defeat, because it was ill paid, his treasury being empty. While the peasants of Friesland, the canons of Utrecht and the nobles of Gelderland were the mainstay of the original Republic, the burgher aristocracy of the trading cities of Brabant and Flanders did not come in until the Duke of Parma succeeded Alva and advised the King to recognise the Republic founded by the Prince of Orange with the support of the native nobility.

Grotius, however, was not the first to formulate a modern political theory on the basis of a secular authority. As early as in 1324, Marsiglio of Padua improved upon the Aristotelian theory of the State. His ideas were so very remarkably ahead of his time, though based on ancient wisdom, that he has been described as "the most modern of all the mediaevals."¹⁹ Rejecting all authority, Marsi-

glio based his political theory on facts. He boldly expressed the opinion that the source of law was neither the divine right of the rulers, nor the superior wisdom of the learned, but the common sense of the whole body of citizens. "We declare that, according to the truth, and to the opinion of Aristotle, the Law-Giver the primary essential and the efficient source of law is the People, or a majority of them, acting of their own free choice openly declared, in a general assembly of citizens, and prescribing something to be done or not done in regard to civil affairs under penalty of temporal punishment. The truth of a proposition is more accurately judged and its usefulness to the community more carefully taken into account, when the whole body of citizens apply their intelligence."²⁰ Those basic principles of the parliamentary democratic system were enunciated much ahead of time, by a mediaeval jurist, while the bourgeoisie were hardly out of their swaddling clothes. Marsiglio calmly ignored the pretensions of the Holy Empire as well as the authority of the Pope, and declared that law for the governance of this world must have the sanction of a secular authority, which, according to the Natural Law, was vested in the people. He argued that positive laws were "the reasoned application of the Natural Law."

In the Introduction to his book, Marsiglio states that it was written as a supplement to Aristotle's *Politics*. But formally following the Aristotelian principles, he reached conclusions which were most repugnant to the mediaeval interpreters of the philosopher. In fact, Marsiglio's conclusions were influenced by the clearly naturalist and rationalist principles of Latin Averroism as distinct from the interpretation of the Nominalists of the Paris University, where, also on the authority of the Arab philosopher, an attempt was made to marry reason with faith. Marsiglio argues that faith should not be vulgarised by associating with reason. Because, the one is concerned with the life after death, while the other is a secular category. Faith may be useful for the salvation of soul, but it is simply irrelevant in the consideration of the affairs of this world. That was a round about way of declaring that secular questions must be decided by the dictates of reason without any reference to faith. It is clear how Marsiglio's separation of reason from faith was bound to lead logically to scepticism as regards religion, and secularisation of politics. "Human law is a command, of the whole body of citizens, or of its prevailing part, arising directly from

the deliberations of those empowered to make law, about voluntary acts of human beings to be done or avoided in this world, for the sake of attaining the best end, or some condition desirable for man in this world. I mean, a command the transgression of which is enforced in this world by penalty or punishment imposed on the transgressor."²¹

In the sixteenth century, before Grotius, a succession of great lawyers devoted their intellect to a new examination of the Roman Law from the point of view of the conditions of their time. The most famous among them were Nicholas of Cusa, John Gerson (1363-1429), Johannes Althusius and Jean Bodin.

Johannes Althusius (c.1557-1638) was a Calvinist. Nevertheless, in his work the relation between theology and the Natural law appears to be very ambiguous. He maintained that the original association of men was a natural process, being an integral part of human nature. Therefore, it is not to be explained by any *ad hoc* assumption such as social contract,²² the implication of which argument was that society was not a divine creation, but resulted from the operation of the law of nature.

Bodin's monumental work, *Republic*, was hailed as the most complete and systematic treatise on politics since Aristotle. In the tradition of Marsiglio (Marsilius of Padua d.c. 1342), Bodin demanded subordination of the ecclesiastical power to the sovereignty of the secular State based on Positive Law. Discussing the question of sovereignty, Bodin maintained that usurpation was the origin of monarchy (the only sovereign power known at that time). Rejecting the distinction made by Aristotle between a king and a tyrant, he held that a king governed according to the Law of Nature, whereas a tyrant outraged it. Ideas of law, sovereignty, administration were in the melting pot. A comprehensive political philosophy was the need of the time. The classical concept of the natural law as the source of all authority, provided the common point of departure. But how did the State originate? How did the Law of Nature operate so as to provide sanction for a secular authority? How the concept of Natural law was to be brought down from the realm of metaphysical speculation, and itself be secularised? "From a philosophical investigation of these questions, the lawyers passed by an inevitable transition to an examination of the origin of government, a subject which they pursued from their own point of view, as energetically as the theologians."²³ Hobbes, a contemporary of Grotius, produced a comprehensive political philosophy.

Two conflicting implications were inherent in the old notion of Natural Law inherited from the Stoics and elaborated by the Roman Jurists. "On the one hand, there was a theory of limitations upon human activities imposed by Reason in view of human nature, and on the other hand, there was theory of moral qualities inherent in human beings, or natural rights, demonstrated by Reason as deduced from human nature."²⁴ In the new conception of law expounded by the predecessors of Grotius, the two theories were mixed up. Grotius cleared up the confusion with the argument that the purpose of law was not to limit human rights and human activities, but to enable man to act on his own responsibility. That was a clear break with the mediaeval notion of law, which stifled man's creativeness and precluded him from the responsibility of making moral judgements. Grotius held that certain qualities inherent in man recognised the Natural Law. "The mother of Natural Law is human nature itself. For, the very nature of man, which, even if we had no lack of anything, would lead us into the mutual relations of society, is the mother of the Law of Nature. Among the properties which are peculiar to man is a desire for society, and not only so, but for a life spent tranquilly and rationally. The assertion that by nature each seeks only his own advantage cannot be conceded. And this tendency to the conservation of society is the source of *jus* or Natural Law. Natural Law would remain if there were no God."²⁵

Grotius went to the extent of saying that the will of God was always in addition to the Natural Law; it could never contradict the latter. "Just as God cannot make twice two not to be four, he cannot make that which is intrinsically bad not to be bad." Grotius insists upon the social and rational nature of man. Natural law is founded upon the primitive altruistic instinct and also the rational nature of man. By implication, Grotius holds that certain things are right and others wrong in their own nature, that is, apart from the will of God. The doctrine of Natural Law has always been based on an appeal to reason. Grotius cleared the concept of reason from all mystic and transcendental connotation, and defined it as a property of the human mind. Thus, the old notion of Natural Law as elaborated by him provided a rational method for the making of positive laws for the guidance of the political organisation of society.

Man's age-long struggle for freedom at last brought about an eclipse of theology and a quiet disregard for ecclesiastical authority.

Aspiration for political liberty became the new incentive of the struggle. There must be a mighty revolt against "Voluntary Servitude". A book bearing this title was published by Montaigne, its author, La Boetie, having died at the age of thirty-two. The following passage quoted from that book breathes the spirit of the age:

"Wretched and insensate people, enamoured of your misery and blind to your interest, you suffer your property to be pillaged, your fields devastated, and your houses stripped of their goods, and all this by one whom you yourselves raised to power, and whose dignity you maintain with your lives! Yours are the many eyes that spy your acts, the many hands that strike you, the many feet that trample you in dust; all the power with which he injures you is your own. From indignities that the beasts themselves would not endure, you can free yourselves by simply willing it. Resolve to serve no more, and you are free. Think of the battles of Miltiades, of Leonidas and of Themistocles, which after two-thousand years are as freshly in the minds of men as though they were of yesterday. They were triumphs not so much of Greece as of liberty..... All other, goods men will labour to obtain, but to liberty alone they are indifferent. Yet we were all moulded in the same dye, all born in freedom as brothers, born too with a love of liberty which nothing but our vices has effaced."

That spirit of revolt was not compatible with Christianity, Catholic or Protestant; indeed, with any religion. It proclaimed that man was the master of his destiny. There was no supernatural power presiding over his fate. Recognition of the right of resistance to despotic power became a condition for further human advance. Therefore, Grotius and others came to the conclusion was obvious: In quest of freedom, man had left behind the age of faith; further advance towards the goal was conditional upon rejection of the religious mode of thought in favour of reason and scientific knowledge.

By that time, science had come of age; speculative thought could be replaced by a philosophy based on positive knowledge. Descartes was the architect of the edifice of the new philosophy. He developed the method of "Rightly Conducting the Reason and Seeking the Truth in the Science." This full title of his famous treatise on *Method* clearly indicates the nature of the new philosophy founded by Descartes. At last a mathematically sound hypothesis of a mechanistic cosmology was set up. The inductive method of

reasoning—from experience, from the particulars—was Francis Bacon's contribution to the new philosophy. He also declared that the object of philosophy was to enable man to acquire mastery over the forces of nature by means of scientific discoveries. He was the first to use the now familiar expression "knowledge is power." Respectfully bowing Aristotle out of the place of honour conceded to him by orthodox tradition, Bacon held up Democritus, the father of Materialism, as the greatest of ancient philosophers. Modern thought was to take up the threads of ancient Materialism, relegating the long enough religious interlude to the museum of history.

The philosophy of Hobbes was purely secular. He had no use even for metaphysical rationalism. He was an out-and-out Materialist. Natural Law, for him, was not an abstract philosophical concept. The founders of human society were not philosophers full of wisdom; they were beast-like bipeds with no culture, moved only by the instinct of self-preservation; that urge eventually welded them together, and thus laid the foundation of society. That was not man's fall from Grace; that was how Natural Law began moulding human life and dominating the development of society—from savagery to civilisation.

Brushing aside the whole period of history during which all thinking was more or less mixed up with religion and theology, Hobbes went all the way back to the Epicurean tradition, to discover the stable basis for a really secular philosophy. While an exile in Paris, he met Gassendi who had revived the latest and the most positive achievement of the ancient Greek civilisation. While Christian theology appropriated the philosophy of Aristotle, Epicurus was practically forgotten. Gassendi was a physicist, and was fully equipped with a knowledge of all the systems of naturalist philosophy which had been developed in ancient Greece. Therefore, he could "embrace with a sure glance exactly what was best suited to modern times and to the empirical tendency of his age."²⁶

Gassendi not only rescued ancient atomism, but showed that, though a pagan (so also was Aristotle), Epicurus was the purest moralist of all ancient philosophers. To revive the Epicurean tradition was an extremely difficult task. Practically all the works of Epicurus were destroyed, and he had for centuries been the object of gross misrepresentation and shameless calumny. His entire philosophy had to be reconstructed from one reliable source—the

famous poem *De Rerum Naturae* by Lucretius, written in the last century before Christ. Gassendi introduced Lucretius to the scholars of the time. Born during the period of the civil war in Rome, when everything was in the most unstable and chaotic condition, the poet sought for some meaning of life and found it only in the philosophy of Epicurus. The essence of the Epicurean philosophy is set forth in the very beginning of the poem.

"When human life to view lay foully prostrate upon earth, crushed down under the weight of religion, who showed her head from the quarters of heaven with hideous aspect lowering upon mortals, a man of Greece ventured first to lift up his mortal eyes to her face, and first withstand her to her face. Him neither story of gods, nor thunderbolts, nor heaven with threatening roar, could quell, but only stirred up the more—the eager courage of his soul, filling him with desire to be the first to burst the fast bars of Nature's portals."²⁷

Beginning as the naturalism of the early physicists, Greek philosophy, having gone through several stages of metaphysical development, culminated in the Materialism of Epicurus, who held that deliverance from the degrading influence of religion was the aim of philosophy. Therefore, when in quest of freedom man ultimately revolted against God, he found inspiration only in the liberating tradition of the Epicurean philosophy, which had improved upon ancient naturalism by showing that the law-governed Universe made room for individual freedom by incorporating in it a system of ethics which required no metaphysical sanction. Lucretius describes the Epicurean view of the evolution of man from his primitive state:

"Hardened against frost and heat, they lived, like the animals, without any agricultural arts. The fruitful soil offered them spontaneously streams and springs. They dwelt in forests and caves without morality or law. The use of fire and even a clothing of skins were unknown. In their contests with the wild animals, they generally conquered, and were pursued by few only. Gradually, they learned to build huts, to prepare the soil for crops and the use of fire; the ties of family life were formed and men began to grow more gentle. Friendship grew up between neighbours, mercy to women and children was introduced, and though perfect harmony might not yet reign, yet, for the most part, men lived in peace with one another."

Here is undoubtedly the picture of the origin of human society, which became the foundation of the political philosophy of Hobbes. Philosophically an avowed Materialist, Hobbes reaches his idea of the origin of the State with the following remarkable arguments:

"Nature, the art whereby God hath made and governs the world, is by the art of man, as in many other things, so in this also, imitated, that it can make an artificial animal. For seeing life is but within; why may we not say that all automatic have an artificial life? What is the heart but a spring, and the nerves, but so many life? What is the heart but a spring, and the nerves, but so many strings; and the joints, but so many wheels, giving motion to the whole body, such as was intended by the artificer? Art goes yet further, imitating that rational and most excellent work of nature, man. For by art is created that great *Leviathan* called a Commonwealth or State, in Latin, *civitas*, which is but an artificial man, though of greater stature and strength than the natural, for whose protection and defence it was intended; and in which the sovereignty is an artificial soul, as giving life and motion to the whole body."²⁸

The description of the natural state of man led to a contradiction. Nature has made men equal in faculties of the body and mind. "From this equality of ability ariseth equality of hope in the attaining of our ends. If two men desire the same thing, which nevertheless they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies; and, in the way to their end, which is principally their own conservation and sometimes their delectation only, endeavour to destroy and subdue one another." These pessimistic conclusions are wrongly drawn from a realistic analysis of the equality of men in the state of nature. It is done to explain the necessity of laws, political organisation of society. Hobbes finds the solution of an artificially created problem in the operation of the Natural Law. "The passions that incline men to peace are fear and death, desire of such things as are necessary to commodious living, and a hope, by their industry, to obtain them. And reason suggesteth convenient articles of peace upon which men may be drawn to agreement. These articles are there which otherwise are called the Laws of Nature."

Then Hobbes proceeds to explain terms: Natural right means the liberty of each man to use his own power for the preservation of his life. Liberty is the absence of external impediments which often deprive man of the power to do what he would. And "a law

of nature is a precept or general rule found out by reason by which a man is forbidden to do that which is destructive of his life." But the otherwise logically consistent philosophy of Hobbes remained vitiated by a fallacy. It was the inability to recocile freedom of will with the mechanistic view of life. Once it is shown, as Hobbes did following Epicurus, that society was the creation of man, that man was not created by God to fulfil any divine design, man's creativeness logically follows; and creativeness presupposes will. But scientific knowledge was not yet advanced enough. Astronomy and physics had established a plausible hypothesis of mechanistic cosmology, which could embrace man as an "automaton". But the science of man was still to rise to explain the structure and the function of the highest organism. The potentialities of man as the embodiment of a sovereign power were not understood until biology developed to the extent of annexing psychology to its domain. Only then was the relation between will and reason revealed, and a flawless materialist philosophy became possible.

In the seventeenth century, when the ideological foundation of the modern civilisation and culture were laid, a harmony of humanism and a materialist cosmology (naturalism) could be found in the Epicurean tradition. By freeing atomism of its original naivety, Epicurus made room for individual freedom in a law-governed Universe, in a world obeying the laws of nature. The Epicurean view as described by Lucretius was an anticipation of the doctrine of natural selection in the physical world.

"For verily not by design did the first beginnings of things station themselves each in its right place, guided by keen-sighted intelligence, nor did they bargain, sooth to say, what motions each should assume, but because many in number, and shifting about in many ways throughout the Universe, they are driven and tormented by blows during infinite time past; after trying motions and unions of every kind, at length they fall into arrangements such as those out of which this our sum of things has formed, and by which too it is preserved through many great years, when once it has been thrown into the appropriate motions, and causes the streams to replenish the greedy sea with copious river waters, and the earth, fostered by the heat of the sun, to renew its produce, and the race of live things to come up and flourish, and the gliding fires of ether to live."²⁹

On the threshold of modern times, man was again confronted

with the same problems as of old—the problems of his own being and becoming in the context of his surroundings, physical as well as social. Without understanding the natural phenomena which provided the background of his physical being, he could not harness them for his benefit and thus succeed in the struggle for existence. How to acquire the knowledge of nature so as to have the power to master it? The society and State, created by man for carrying on the struggle for existence more successfully, should not deprive him of his natural freedom. How should social and political relations be regulated so that they might serve the purpose of helping man attain greater and greater freedom instead of making an automaton out of him?

The intellectual life of classical antiquity culminated in the Epicurean revolt against natural religion. The subsequent revolt of man known as the Renaissance drew inspiration from that spiritual tradition. Then began a new stage of intellectual development, a new adventure of ideas. Ultimately, institutionalised Christianity, Catholic as well as Protestant, was eclipsed by the revival of naturalism, reinforced by the newly acquired scientific knowledge. The incentive for that new achievement of human creativeness was provided by the idea of the Natural Law, which replaced the religious belief in a creator or the mystic notion of a teleological order ordained by a divine Providence. The laws of the order of nature could be discovered and understood. They need no longer be ascribed to any supernatural agency beyond the control of man; and society, being also a creation of man, could be so administered as to serve the purpose of man, the purpose being attainment of freedom.

NOTES

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Chapter VII

BIRTH OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY

Ever since the intellectual Renaissance of the twelfth century, theology had been steadily undermined by scholastic rationalism. But its imposing structure did not begin to crumble until the rise of a mechanistic cosmology. Metaphysical rationalism had been completely absorbed in the science of God by the genius of Albertus Magnus and his greater disciple Thomas Aquinas. In the early thirteenth century, the University of Paris was the breeding ground of free thought, which threatened to pass beyond the limits of theology. Peter Abelard, the earliest harbinger of the Renaissance, had presumed to explain the mystery of the Trinity, and dared to submit all things in heaven and earth to the test of human reason. Subsequently, scholastic rationalism moved farther away from theology and tended towards philosophy under the impact of "new Aristotle" introduced in Western Europe by the secular Arab thinkers. Averroes' interpretation of "the philosopher", which dominated the schools of the West for two centuries, emphasised and developed the most anti-Christian elements in his teachings, such as the eternity of matter, the unity of active intellect and the negation of individual immortality. The traditional study of *Logic* was superseded by that of *Physics*, *De Anima* and parts of *Metaphysics*. Natural philosophy penetrated the strongholds of supernaturalism, and challenged the supremacy of theology.

Orthodox schoolmen unsuccessfully struggled against the Arabian Aristotle until Albertus Magnus smuggled in the "Averroesist heresy" on the authority of Aristotle dressed in Christian garb. European intellect had been so very deeply influenced by the Arab rationalist thought that even Thomas Aquinas was compelled to differentiate philosophy from theology, thus vindicating the earlier heretic, Abelard. Finally, on the authority of the two greatest Christian scholars and thinkers of the Middle-Age, scholastic

rationalism received the stamp of orthodoxy. A clear line was drawn between natural and revealed religion, between truth which could be established by human reason and the transcendental truth which was to be revealed only by the grace of God. Significantly enough, even that region of supernaturalism was thrown open to reason, to the extent of examining the self-consistency of authority. That was a veritable revolution in the realm of human thought.

"Hitherto philosophy had been either an avowed foe or a dangerous and suspected ally. By the genius of the great Dominicans (Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas), all that was (potentially) Christian or not un-Christian in Aristotle was woven into the very substance and texture of what was henceforth more and more to grow into the accredited theology of the Catholic Church. The content of the whole philosophy of the pagan philosopher, including even his great treatise on ethics, are embodied in the *Summa Theologiae*. The grand conviction that religion is rational and that reason is divine, that all knowledge and all truth, from whatever source derived, must be capable of harmonious adjustment—of that conviction the *Summa* remains a magnificent monument, still, on some points, not wholly useless as a help to the rationalisation of Christian belief."¹

Modern philosophy thus was not born on a particular date, or even in a clearly demarcated short period, as the ideology of a rising class. Its growth, indeed, was a dialectic process; but it was a process of dynamics, not of mechanics—of internal motion, not of any external impact. It was a continuous process of intellectual unfoldment; there were interruptions, but no break. Rationalism as well as naturalism, born of the adolescence of the human spirit, did not die out even in the dark age of Christian bigotry; thereafter, matured in the Schools of mediaeval learning, under the terrifying tutelage of theology they blossomed forth, one in the springtide of the intellectual Renaissance of the twelfth century, and the other in the great humanist resurgence. Ultimately, the two apparently divergent currents of man's spiritual energy merged into the modern philosophy.

Throughout the Middle-Ages, the study of cosmology, astronomy, physics and mathematics was pursued by obscure scholars.² The intellectual life of that time was not "an age-long weary orgy of barren chatter interrupted by the orderly arguments of a few men of genius who were as isolated as they were great, but

a process of incessant wisdom and folly with distinguishable lines of development in it, a process which did not come to a sudden close on the appearance of Erasmus and Luther, nor linger fruitlessly in obsolete schools, but threw up ideas and ways of thought and speech which have profoundly influenced the science and philosophy of the modern world. The change which began to pass over the schools of France in the eleventh century, and culminated in the great intellectual Renaissance of the following age, was but an effort of that general revivification of the human spirit which should be recognised as constituting an epoch in the history of European civilisation not less momentous than the Reformation or the French Revolution."³

On the other hand, having grown out of that background of a continuous intellectual unfoldment, under so very different conditions, modern philosophy naturally carried the ballast of mediaeval tradition in the metaphysical rationalism of its founder. At the same time, the success of Descartes' mission of liberating philosophy from the tutelage of theology⁴ was possible only thanks to the epoch-making discoveries of Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo. With the appearance of those pioneers of scientific (mechanistic) naturalism, the Renaissance assumed an independent character. The fifteenth century was a period of transition. The great humanists of that period heralded the coming of a new era on the authority of ancient traditions. With the rise of modern science, the Renaissance outgrew its revivalist character. The new era was to be really new, inspired by a new philosophy which combined rationalist tradition with naturalism reinvigorated by modern science. "The sixteenth century marks its place in history as the century of revolutions; it not only broke the chain which bound Europe to Rome; it also broke the chain which bound philosophy to scholasticism. It set human reason free; it proclaimed the liberty of thought and action."⁵

The doctrine of Natural Law liberated the human spirit from the fetters of the venerable dogmas of religion and the awe-inspiring authority of theology. The law-governed Universe of Christian theology; was ruled by super-natural laws given by God who had originally created a cosmos out of chaos. At the close of the Middle-Ages, Nature replaced God; but at the same time the Natural Law deprived man of the limited degree of freedom conceded to him by religion. Man's soul, after all, was a spark of the

divine light. Christianity granted a free will to man, though it was freedom only to commit sin so that his soul could be redeemed by Grace. Modern philosophy, as it crystallised with Bacon, Hobbes and Descartes, was confronted with the problem of reconciling, on the one hand, a rationalist metaphysics with a mechanistic cosmology, human reason with physical nature and, on the other hand, the idea of freedom with the concept of necessity. The naturalist humanism of the Renaissance appeared to be in conflict with the mechanistic naturalism of science, and the latter with the sovereignty of human reason and freedom of human will, although all of them united in challenging the tyranny of theology. To put it differently, the problem was to harmonise human reason, including will, with physical determinism. All the traditional concepts, the old patterns of thought, were thus in the melting pot.

The Cartesian method of doubting everything was certainly the only way out of the apparent confusion. In that sense, Descartes may be called the founder of modern philosophy, although, in the last analysis, the spirit of the new era was represented more truly by Bacon's empiricism (inductive logic) and Hobbes' determinism than by Descartes' rationalist metaphysics. However, the genius of all the three taken together raised philosophy to the independent status of a system of human knowledge, of nature and man's relation with it. Breaking away from super-naturalism, modern philosophy set the human spirit free; an exhilarating perspective of newer and greater adventures of ideas was opened up before the daring vision of the spiritually free man.⁶

The fundamental problem faced by modern philosophy at its birth, the problem of the relation between thought and being, is as old as philosophy itself. Even before the resurgence of humanist naturalism, the old question of philosophy was revived by the schoolmen of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, who tried to reconcile theology with rationalism. In course of time, the selfsame problem was differently formulated; it was posed as the question of the relation of human thought about the world with the world itself: Can the human mind really know the world? Do man's notions and perceptions contain a picture of the reality? Ancient naturalism had been concerned chiefly with the reality of the Universe. Descartes combined the study of the physical Universe with an analysis of the human mind; modern philosophy thus was to be reared upon the twin pillars of Physics and Psychology.

"The question regarding the relation of thought to being, of the spirit to nature, the highest question of philosophy, has its roots, no less than religion, in the ignorant notions of man in the state of barbarism. This question could be put in the state of barbarism. But this question could be put in the sharpest form, and in all its significance, only after the European people emerged from the long winter slumber of the Christian Middle-Ages."⁸ That would be a very correct appreciation of the genesis of the dualist fallacy, and a sound observation about the birth of modern philosophy, if the last phrase were re-written as follows: after the resurrection of science or the rise of modern science.

As a matter of fact, modern philosophy of the Cartesian school suffered from the dualist fallacy, because the science of life and mind still lagged behind, while Mathematics, Physics and Astronomy forged ahead. The problem of dualism, which baffled philosophy in the seventeenth century, resulted from the uneven development of science. In the last analysis, it was the old dichotomy of matter and mind, which was finally resolved in Benedict Spinoza's (1632-1808) unitary system, but still on the basis of metaphysical rationalism.

Reason was not humanised ; it was not placed in the context of physical nature accessible to human understanding until modern philosophy was reinforced by psychological doctrines deduced from the physiological and biological enquiries of Hartley, Erasmus, Darwin, Destutt de Tracy (1754-1836), and Pierre Jean Georges Cabanis (1757-1808) and others. Then, the anomaly which had faced human intellect just when modern philosophy liberated it from the authority of super-naturalism and tyranny of theology—the anomaly of Nature replacing God, but Natural Law depriving man of all freedom—disappeared like mist on the rising of the sun. The mathematical rigour of Spinoza's rationalism (deductive method) placed man, with his mind, theoretically in the unitary scheme of nature. In his monistic system, the apparent contradiction between Natural Law and human will disappeared; because both could be referred back to a common origin, reduced to a common denominator.

Before long, the rationally conceived theory of man's relation to nature was empirically verified by psychological enquiries and physiological researches. Man being an integral part of nature, his will to freedom is a natural urge—a manifestation of the Natural

Law. There is no contradiction between reason and will; on the other hand, a rationalist metaphysics and a mechanistic cosmology can be harmonised in a monistic philosophical system. Human reason is a continuation of the reason in nature—the Natural Law, which is not a transcendental metaphysical concept, but an abstraction from the experience that physical processes are determined. The corollary is a reconciliation of the concept of necessity and urge for freedom, the latter being a specific expression of the Natural Law in the animate world. Ultimately, absolved of the original sin of ignorance, and freed from the mediaeval ballast of superstition, the native rationality of human nature realised itself in romanticism—the belief in man's unlimited creativeness, man's belief in himself.

The Cartesian system, notwithstanding all its defects, particularly its dualist fallacy, orientated the human spirit to that direction of the liberty of thought and action.⁹ Therefore, Descartes has gone down in history as the founder of modern philosophy, which ushered in the new era heralded by the naturalist humanism of the Renaissance. "Rene Descartes is usually considered the founder of modern philosophy, and, I think, rightly. He is the first man of high philosophic capacity whose outlook is profoundly affected by the new physics and astronomy. While it is true that he retains much of scholasticism, he does not accept the foundations laid by his predecessors, but endeavours to construct the complete philosophic edifice *de novo*. This had not happened since Aristotle; and is a sign of the new self-confidence that resulted from the progress of science. There is a freshness about his work that is not to be found in any eminent previous philosopher since Plato."¹⁰

Descartes has been described as 'a partaker of the modern spirit' in the full sense of the term, because he was a product of the Reformation as well as of the Renaissance, having combined the conflicting tendencies represented by such diverse personalities as Erasmus, Bacon and Luther.¹¹ This view of Descartes' historical heritage and cultural background is based on the still prevailing error in understanding the respective movements of thought. Erasmus and Luther did not leave a joint legacy for Descartes to inherit; nor could he be true to the tradition of one as well as of the other, and yet be the founder of modern philosophy entirely independent of theology.¹²

Descartes was the embodiment *par excellence* of the modern spirit,

because not only did he completely break with the wrong notions of the past,¹³ but also his genius penetrated deeper into the future than he himself realised or his conventional interpreters have done even to-day.

Descartes conceived philosophy as the universal science, and, in his opinion, physics was the foundation of all sciences. The Cartesian philosophy coordinated physics with mathematics, and applied physics to physiology. Thus, it was a promising approach to the fundamental problem of the relation of man to nature, and also to the more difficult problem of man knowing himself. Descartes' scientific thinking, as distinct from his rationalist metaphysical speculations which could not quite outgrow an atavistic tendency, contained the bold suggestion that man is an integral part of the physical nature, and only as such can he have the knowledge of the truth of his being and becoming. If the laws of physics, that is to say, of the inanimate world, were applicable to the internal functions of biological organisms, then there could be no hiatus between the living and the non-living. The Cartesian psycho-physical parallelism resulted from the arbitrary postulate of a "rational soul" superimposed on the fully mechanistic biological organism of man. To that extent, the ghost of scholasticism was still haunting the founder of modern philosophy. Nevertheless, in the Cartesian philosophy, soul is even less immaterial than in Aristotle's naturalism. The adjective *rational* is of supreme importance. Yet, precisely that would be the source of ambiguity, so long as the concept of reason remained veiled in mystery. But on that point also, Descartes' ideas contained the light to penetrate the veil.

In the Cartesian system, the abstract concept of the Natural law is concretised as the coherence and expression of the invariant relations of the physical world; on the one hand; and, on the other hand, the metaphysical concept of rationality also received a human content. By coordinating a rationalist metaphysics with a physically deterministic naturalism, Descartes prepared the ground for the rise of a really new philosophy. It was like a mutation in the evolution of thought. It changed the outlook of man fundamentally: on the one hand, the world is a cosmos, but not a teleological order serving an inscrutable divine purpose; on the other hand, man is a rational being possessed of the capacity to acquire knowledge of the mechanism of nature, of his relation with it, and, thanks to that ever growing knowledge, gain power¹⁴ to mould

the world according to his will and consequently hold his destiny in his own hand. That is the romantic view of life, which places man, himself a process of becoming, imbedded in the self-contained and self-governed scheme of Nature, in the centre of the world, to create new worlds, social as well as conceptual, out of the available material provided by Nature. It is romanticism, not mystic and dreamy, but naturalist in the scientific sense.

In order to formulate a philosophy as the universal science, Descartes had to revolutionise the conception of science prevailing in his time. Science was as yet too undeveloped to be so universalised as to be identical with philosophy; nor could it even build up an abstract theoretical system mathematically deduced from empirical propositions. The pioneering efforts to acquire knowledge of the various aspects of nature had to be made empirically, by the humdrum method of observation and experiment, by the patience of modest men. Descartes' impetuosity, therefore, was premature; it preferred mathematical reasoning to empiricism¹⁵ which was essential for laying down a solid and reliable foundation of objective knowledge for a scientific theoretical structure of profound philosophical significance. Nevertheless, Descartes' impetuosity placed before man's intellect an inspiring vision. He compared science to a tree; metaphysics is the root; physics, the trunk; and mechanics, medicine and morals are the three main branches, being the respective application of man's knowledge to nature, the human body and human behaviour.

The *Principles of Philosophy*, which contains Descartes' scientific ideas, was the last to be published of his three main works. But it was the first to be written, substantially, and an outline of it was published in 1637 (before the publication of *Discourse* and *Meditations*) with the object of making "some general observations which, under an appearance of simplicity, might sow the good seed of more adequate ideas on the world and man". The book was anonymously published under the title *Philosophical Essays*. But it carried a sub-title describing its contents: "Project of a Universal Science capable of raising our nature to its highest perfection, wherein the most curious matters which the author as a proof of the universal science, which he proposes, are explained in such a way that even the unlearned may understand them."

The desire to democratise science and philosophy was inherent in the spirit of modernism, which ushered in the era of democ-

racy.¹⁶ But during the following centuries of phenomenal expansion of scientific knowledge and the consequent enrichment of philosophy, Descartes' admirable democratic desire was forgotten. Empirical research and elaboration of theories necessarily led to extreme specialisation, excluding general participation in scientific knowledge. To philosophise also became the privilege of an elite. To an extent, the line of intellectual progress, contradictory to the democratic desire of Descartes, could not be avoided. Nevertheless, had all the scientists and philosophers of the centuries of enlightenment and great scientific achievements felt it keenly enough, Descartes' ambition to democratise intellectual life could have been realised. The widest possible dissemination of scientific knowledge and philosophical thought might have made a reality of democracy. Fulfilment of the desire of Descartes still remains a fundamental necessity of an all-round social development. Except on the basis of a democratisation of knowledge and rational thought, democracy is not possible.

Descartes' method answers the question: How is intelligence, as distinct from erudition, possible? He was constantly trying to fight down his scholastic atavism. "There is no question more important to solve than that of knowing what human knowledge is and how far it extends. The first thing to know is intellect, because on it depends knowledge of all other things."¹⁷ Imagination and memory are the other two or three source of knowledge. Descartes often identified sense perceptions (sensual data) with memory. But the knowledge acquired only from these sources is obscure, fragmentary and incoherent; therefore, they are likely to lead us astray unless the data provided by them were subjected to the judgment of intellect, which alone is capable of discriminating between truth and error. Cartesian intellect is evidently identical with rationality.

Descartes' extreme scepticism was very useful in liberating human intelligence from the paralysing bondage of tradition and authority. But the fallacious dictum: *Cogito, ergo sum* made for subjective Idealism, which clouded man's vision, opened up at the birth of modern philosophy, and prepared a psychological atmosphere congenial for the religious revivalism of Berkeley, which confused philosophy for a long time to come. The confusion still persists, to be cleared so that the grand vision of man's freedom and human creativeness may be restored to dissipate the mist

heavily hanging over the present, and to penetrate the darkness of the future.

The motto—*Cogito, ergo sum*—at the same time could be interpreted as a humanist dictum. Attaching the supreme importance to human reason and human judgment, it placed man at the centre of the world. Man's being was made dependent on himself. The corollary was his power to mould and control his becoming. Man became the master of his destiny. Cartesian rationalism was developed by the more illustrious of his immediate followers (Spinoza and the French Encyclopedists) and later on by a whole succession of philosophers.

Descartes' analytical geometry and the theory of vortices established the mechanistic cosmology. It was a hypothesis freed from the fallacy of action at a distance, which had been solved in ancient atomism in a childish arbitrary manner. While the philosophical implications of the hypotheses of Cartesian physics were very far-reaching, in the field of scientific enquiry they were equally pregnant with great possibilities. They anticipated, perhaps Descartes himself not realising it, the basic concepts of twentieth century physics, namely, multi-dimensional space and all-pervasive substance. Descartes conceived weight and velocity as dimensions of matter, like length, breadth and depth. "By dimensions I understand not precisely the mode and aspect according to which a subject is considered to be measurable. Thus, it is not merely the case that length, breadth and depth are dimensions, but weight also is a dimension in terms of which the heaviness of an object is estimated. So too velocity is a dimension of motion, and there are infinite numbers of similar instances."¹⁸

Cartesian analytical geometry tended towards the concept of non-Euclidean space, and clearly realised the relativity of motion. Descartes rejected "the vulgar conception of motion as the action by which any body passes from one place to another", and defined motion as "the transference of one part of matter or one body from the vicinity of those bodies that are in immediate contact with it, and which we regard as in repose, into the vicinity of other."¹⁹

This definition of motion anticipates in an embryonic form Einstein's Physical Principle of Relativity. Descartes went even further and rejected the notion that fixed location is a categorical imperative of physics. Only in relation to a system of arbitrarily chosen co-ordinates can any point be called fixed. Together with motion,

place was also a relative concept. Read time and space instead of motion and place, to realise how far Descartes' geometrical and physical ideas approximated those of our time. He declared: "I deny the movement of the earth more carefully than Copernicus and more truthfully than Tycho"²⁰ If he really disagreed with the pioneers of modern physics and astronomy, that was because he agreed with Einstein, in anticipation. Perhaps the enigmatic statement was dictated by caution—to escape the long arm of militant sacerdotal authority. But it contained a very large grain of truth, which was not discovered until the beginning of the twentieth century: that no body is ever at rest, except in relation to other moving bodies. In relation to the sun, the earth is moving; but with reference to a system of coordinates in the space surrounding it, the earth can be regarded as stationary.

Descartes' "first matter" is all-pervasive, like the later concept of ether. This bold hypothesis enabled him to do away with metaphysical devices for making things happen, such as Galileo's "force" or "attraction", and Kepler's "active power". And the hypothesis was borne out by the empirical concept of the relativity of motion.

For the insoluble fallacy of action at a distance, Descartes rejects atomism, and conceives space as absolutely full. The traditional concept of space as an ultimate category quietly disappears, and physical space, the space of analytical geometry, becomes coincident with the all-pervasive "first matter", as a measurable function of the latter. Descartes rejects the notion of void space with the argument that the essence of substance being extension, wherever there is extension, there is substance. The problem of action at a distance is solved by one stroke of ingenuity and bold thinking.

The substance which fills the space is composed of angular particles. The mass of matter is in motion. The angular particles are ground into spherical shapes. The particles rubbed off in the process constitute a more subtle kind of matter. The first kind goes into the constitution of luminous bodies like the sun and stars. There is still a third kind of coarser matter, less fitted for motion; it constitutes the opaque bodies—earths and planets. The second category of matter is the transparent substance of the sky. The motion of matter takes the form of revolving circular currents. Thus originate the famous vortices of Descartes. The coarser matter collects at the centre of a vortex, while the finer kinds surround it. The emission of light is their centrifugal motion; and the planets

are carried round the sun by the motion of the vortices.

That is Descartes' theory of vortices which, in his mechanistic cosmology, supplants atomism. Full of naive and *ad hoc* suppositions, the theory nevertheless contains significant pointers of far-reaching implications. For instance, the formation of vortices, and the marking the stage at which the amorphous mass of the primordial stuff is differentiated, bears a striking resemblance to the "wave-packets" of the New Quantum Theory—electrons appearing out of the background of the field of vibratory motion, as groups of concentric waves. Then the all-pervasive substance being self-moving, indeed it being virtually identical with motion, the necessity of postulating an impulse coming from outside, or a prime mover, is eliminated. The conception of an all-pervading substance is free from the obvious fallacies of atomism, one of them being incompatibility with the idea of infinity, and any compromise of that idea makes room for the unknown and unknowable; consequently, mysticism creeps back into cosmology; natural philosophy becomes mystic and metaphysical, if not out and out religious. A self-moving, all-pervasive substance, on the contrary, can be infinitely extended, because it does not require any beyond or outside as the source of the original impulse or the seat of the prime mover.

Therefore, Descartes' mentioning God as the final cause of all movement is entirely gratuitous. While Newton's *deus ex machina* was superfluous, Descartes' God was inadmissible by the logic of his physical theory. He "expressly explained the movement of the particles as well as those of bodies out of mere conduction, according to the law of mechanical impact. He named, indeed, the universal cause of all movements, God; but all bodies, according to him, are subject to a particular motion, and every natural phenomenon consists without distinction of the organic and the inorganic, merely of the conduction of motion of one body to another; and then all mystical explanations of nature were set aside at once."²¹

Though fully convinced that his cosmological hypothesis would be pragmatically confirmed, distrust for empiricism nevertheless induced Descartes to attach greater importance to the rational solution of metaphysical problems. There again, his scholastic atavism made itself felt. Eager to combat scholasticism successfully, he presumably believed that the most effective method would be

to meet the foe on his own ground and fight him with his weapons, pay him in his own coin, so to say. But it was not altogether a practical consideration which influenced Descartes' thinking. Primarily a rationalist, he believed that the foundation of his new philosophy must be a sound metaphysics. His attempt revealed the fallacy of metaphysical rationalism. He did start with the intention of founding a materialist metaphysics. Even after laying special emphasis on the priority of mind, he merged it into the body.²² The mind "has no relation to extension nor dimension; it does not occupy any space; yet is really joined to the whole body, and we cannot say that it exists in any one of its parts to the exclusion of others. It radiates forth through all the remainder of the body by means of animal spirits, nerves and even the blood."²³ As against such a clear tendency towards a materialist metaphysics, Descartes' final appeal to God was out of tune with the spirit of the time which he embodied so largely. It was generally regarded as a concession to prejudice. This weak aspect of the Cartesian system was developed, by his scholastically minded disciples, notably Nicolas Malebranche (1638-1715), as the starting point of modern Idealism.

The fact that he withheld the publication of the work setting forth his scientific views creates the impression that Descartes did desire to avoid martyrdom, and that desire induced him to introduce superfluities and irrelevancies in his metaphysics, which destroyed the coherence and harmony of his entire system. Having started as a scientist, he completed the work of his predecessors, and logically established a mechanistic cosmology, which was the *sine qua non* for dealing the *coup de grace* to decrepit theology. His first important book, the *World*, contained his scientific views. But he withheld its publication when the news of Galileo's tragic fate reached him. This important fact is recorded in his letter to Mersenne, who was to have arranged for the publication of the book in Paris. Portions of that first work were posthumously published. But its full implications and significance were brought out by de la Mettrie (1709-51) in his notorious book,—*Man A Machine* (1748). A Cartesian of the materialist school, de La Mettrie freely acknowledged his indebtedness to the master, and made the cynical remark "that the wily philosopher, purely for the sake of the parsons, has patched on to his theory a soul which is in reality superfluous."

One may not share de la Mettrie's cynicism; but the fact is that even the *Principles of Philosophy*, published after Descartes had won the reputation of a rationalist metaphysician, was prefaced with a cautious declaration. The world was created by God in all its perfections. "But yet, as it is best, if we wish to understand the nature of plants or of men, to consider how they may by degrees proceed from seeds, rather than how they were created by God in the beginning of the world, so, if we can excogitate some extremely simple and comprehensible principles, out of which, as if they were seeds, we can prove that stars and the earth and all this visible scene could have originated, although we know fully well that they never did originate in such a way, we shall in that way expound their nature far better than if we merely described them as they exist at present." The caution with which the enigmatic declaration begins is thrown to the winds before it is concluded. Firstly, science is not concerned with the vain and sterile search for a transcendental teleological final cause; secondly, at the same time, it is not enough for science only to describe phenomena; it must trace their cause in nature; and thirdly, science must have a metaphysical foundation so as to be universal and to support a philosophy conceived as the universal science.

Descartes' cautious statement in the preface of the *Principles* was further counter-acted by a categorical declaration in the text of the book itself: "It is impossible for us to know God's purpose." And on another occasion he remarked: "Give me matter and motion, and I will construct the Universe." In his cosmology, matter and motion are given. What God could do with them, can be done also by a man.

What is the use of having such a God, no more powerful than the mortal man? When the utterly unnecessary introduction of God, whatever might have been his reason to do so, is set aside, Descartes' metaphysics turns out to be a discovery of the rational foundation of the objective physical Universe.

Plato was the first to attempt such a metaphysics. In the meantime, the concept of reason was taken over by scholastic theology, and the rationalist metaphysics became rationalisation of theology. Reason had to be rehabilitated, humanised, so to say, before a rationalist metaphysics could be constructed without prejudicing the objective reality of the physical world. In the time of Descartes, that could not as yet be done empirically; therefore, he

did it theoretically, with the aid of mathematics. During the following centuries, science made much progress in the direction of de-mystifying the concept of reason, and placing it in the context of the scheme of the physical Universe. It was discovered empirically that human reason is a continuation of reason in nature; that it represents the operation of the Natural Law on the highest level of the biological world; that the origin of human rationality can be traced to the rational foundation of the objective physical world. This has now become such a generally admitted article of scientific faith that a front rank philosophically sceptic physicist of our time is compelled to concede that "light may perhaps be thrown upon this darkness (the epistemological confusion created by a tendentious philosophical interpretation of the twentieth century physical theories) when we consider that not only is our reason a part of nature, but that nature must also in some way be concerned with reason."²⁴

While heralding a new era of the spiritual development of man, Descartes at the same time lived in a period of transition. Therefore, his philosophy as a whole contained two distinct tendencies which often got mixed up. Yet, the subsequent development of the two tendencies can be roughly traced in the history of philosophy of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The naturalist, humanist, scientific tendency again, for a time, bifurcated in two directions: (1) The French Enlightenment, and (2) German Romanticism of Herder, Goethe, Schiller, etc., through Spinoza. Rousseau's romanticism, which subsequently inspired the French Revolution, also resulted from the Cartesian humanist rationalism. The metaphysical tendency of Descartes' philosophy, his dualism, having passed through various stages of a not consistent uniform development, culminated in the monistic Idealism of Hegel. Thus, it is no exaggeration to say that Descartes' ideas, directly or indirectly, influenced all the currents of modern philosophical thought until the baffling problem of psycho-physical parallelism was solved by the logical unfolding of his original ideas.

"After all, the metaphysical theology of Descartes, however essential in his own eyes, serves chiefly as the ground for constructing his theory of man and of the Universe. His fundamental hypothesis relegates to God all forces in their ultimate origin. Hence the world is left open for the free play of mechanics and geometry. He starts with the clear and distinct idea of extension,

figured and moved, and thence by mathematical laws he gives a hypothetical explanation of all things. Such explanation of physical phenomena is the main problem of Descartes, and it goes on encroaching upon the territories once supposed proper to the mind. Descartes began with the certainty that we are thinking beings; that religion remains untouched; but up to its very borders, the mechanical explanation of nature reigns unchecked."²⁵

Descartes' differentiation between men and animals was indeed arbitrary. Not only all animals other than man are automata; but also, man, as a biological organism, is a machine as de la Mettrie deduced from Descartes' view that there is no distinction between organic and inorganic nature. "It was due to Descartes that all the functions of intellectual as well as of physical life were finally regarded as products of mechanical changes."²⁶ Yet, he stuck to the idea of soul. At the same time, he hailed Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood even when it was generally deprecated. William Harvey's (1578-1657) discovery exploded the notion of the "vital spirits", which had dominated psychology ever since the days of Aristotle and Galen. Having accepted Harvey's revolutionary theory, Descartes could still retain the idea of soul only as a make-believe. Researches in animal psychology during Descartes' life time compelled him to realise that animals are machines, yet they think.²⁷ Man's supposed superiority disappeared. Montaigne, who was dominating the intellectual life of the time, clinched the issue by declaring in his characteristic paradoxical style, that animals displayed as much, and often more, reason than man. Even the qualified Cartesian concept of a "rational soul", therefore, became untenable. Animals can not only think, but also are rational. If they are biological machines, what is there in man to claim for him a higher status?

Descartes wanted to free the human spirit from the sacrosanct bondage of traditional notions, and place man at the centre of the Universe. With that purpose, he endowed man with souls, which guaranteed his exalted position by anchoring it to the rational foundation of the objective Universe. When it was discovered that human reason was empirically connected with the rational scheme of nature, the imaginary anchorage was no longer necessary. Man occupies the centre of the world as the highest product of the rational process of becoming.

Another current of thought contributing to the rise of modern

philosophy originated with Francis Bacon, an elder contemporary of Descartes. Both took up a critical attitude to scholastic philosophy; an all-round scepticism was their common point of departure. But there the similarity ends. In expounding their ideas, they adopted entirely different methods, which ultimately produced the self-same result—a philosophy for the modern man. Descartes' mathematical rationalism relied entirely on deducing knowledge from self-consciousness, which alone stood the test of scepticism. Bacon, on the contrary, was the prophet of empiricism, which contributed perhaps more to the development of modern philosophy than abstract rationalism. In any case, the inductive method became the instrument of natural science, the great achievements of which bore out Bacon's contention that truth will be discovered only with the help of external experience. "Through all these ages, the smallest part of human industry has been spent upon natural philosophy, though this ought to be esteemed as the great mother of the sciences. Let none expect any great promotion of the sciences unless natural philosophy be drawn out of particular sciences; and again, unless particular sciences be brought back to natural philosophy."²⁸

It is clear that Bacon's empiricism did not preclude a metaphysics. But he insisted upon metaphysics being a generalisation of the positive knowledge of nature acquired empirically. He was against pure speculation. Referring to the vagueness of earlier Naturalism, he refused to accept the view that it was due to anything in nature, and pointed out that "the steadiness and regularity of natural phenomena are remarkable; and therefore are objects of certain and precise knowledge." He therefore came to the conclusion that the vagueness of knowledge, or mystic Naturalism, was due to "the perverseness and inadequacy of speculative thought. Men have sought to make a world from their own conception, and to draw from their own minds all the materials they employed; but if, instead of doing so, they had consulted experience and observation, they would have had facts and not opinion, to reason about, and might have ultimately arrived at the knowledge of the laws which govern the material world."

Descartes brought physiology under the jurisdiction of the laws of physics; but he stopped there, on the brink of an imaginary gulf beyond which he placed the mind and soul of man. On this point, his revolt against Scholastic philosophy amounted to throwing out

the baby with the bath water. Thomas Aquinas had taken over the essentially correct Aristotelian doctrine that life and mind are manifestations of an identical thing. In the Thomist theology, life became "the breathe of God", and consequently, mind also was regarded as an immaterial spiritual category—the seat of Reason. The naturalist philosophers of the Renaissance wanted to liberate life from the tyranny of the supernatural. Theirs, however, was an one-sided revolt, which resulted in the dualism of Descartes. Bacon's was a total revolt. He declared: "I propose to establish progressive stages of certainty. The evidence of sense, helped and guarded by a certain process of correction, I retain, but the mental operation which follows the acts of sense, I, for the most part, reject, and, instead of it, I open and lay out anew a certain path for the mind to proceed in, starting directly from the simple sensuous perceptions."²⁹

There is a degree of extravagance of language. Actually, Bacon did not propose total rejection of mental operations. What he did, was to deny that there was a gulf between the senses and the mind. He rescued the Aristotelian doctrine of the identity of life and mind, which had been perverted in the Thomist theology, with the qualification that the former was the foundation of mind. The relation between psychology and physiology thus discovered empirically, the psyche ceases to be a transcendental mystic entity. The mind, marooned beyond the imaginary gulf which separates it from the world of life, can never be informed; "pure reason" can never yield positive knowledge. To be informed, mind must come out of the ivory tower to receive the sense perceptions as the raw material of knowledge. Bacon's empiricism and materialist metaphysics indicated the way out of the vicious circle of Cartesian dualism. Rationalism informed by empiricism, and empiricism corrected by informed rationalism, are the components of a true philosophy.

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), a disciple of Bacon and a critic of Descartes, made a substantial contribution to the development of modern philosophy by co-ordinating their divergent currents of thought. An uncompromising empiricist, he defined philosophy so as to identify it with natural science. While touring Europe, early in the seventeenth century, Hobbes made the important discovery that the scholastic philosophy which he had learned in Oxford was discredited in intellectual circles, replaced by scientific and

critical thought. Vehemently criticising Descartes' metaphysics, which he characterised as a relapse into scholastic obscurantism, Hobbes, however, did not follow Bacon to the extent of rejecting "mental operations which follow the acts of sense." In method, he rather sided with Descartes, who, as a scientist, admitted that the real demonstrative power of any proposition lies in experience.³⁰ In other words, Hobbes adopted and developed the Cartesian method of enquiry as far as it was scientific. Scince is not all empiricism; mental operations deprecated by Bacon play a decisive rôle in the process of acquiring knowledge of objective realities. The failure to grasp this inter-relation of the subject and object gave birth in the past to the dualist fallacy, and has been creating imaginary epistemological problems even in our time. Yet, that grasp is the essence of scientific method; and Descartes was the founder of the scientific method, although he himself might not have fully realised the implication of his attempt at a harmony of rationalism and empiricism. Hobbes detected that intrinsic merit of the Cartesian method and improved upon it. He demanded that philosophy must be based upon *natural reason*. Thus, he detached rationalism from its traditional metaphysical setting, and placed it in the context of physical nature.

Though conventionally not counted among great philosophers of the rank of Descartes and Spinoza, Hobbes was the only thinker of his time to have developed in his mind a system of a universal philosophy embracing the phenomena of Body (physical nature), Man and State.³¹ Apparently, metaphysics was excluded from his scheme; in reality, that was not so. Only, Hobbes as an empiricist felt very strongly against the method of starting with metaphysics; but metaphysical questions relevant to natural philosophy were treated in his system empirically. Scientific enquiry into the worlds of physics and psychology opened up an empirical approach to the problems of reason, consciousness and morality, generally conceived as metaphysical. Hobbes was the harbinger of modern psychology, which was developed by the Sensationalist John Locke (1632-1704) and his followers.³² When it is remembered that, through Condillac (1715-1780), Locke greatly influenced the intellectual life of France in the eighteenth century, Hobbes' place in the history of philosophy is properly appreciated.

Although he had conceived the scheme of his all-embracing philosophy independently, Hobbes came into prominence first as a

critic of Descartes' *quasi* scholastic metaphysics and absolute dualism. He rejected the doctrine of "innate ideas" with the argument which turned the table on Descartes: Any activity or change is motion; thinking is a form of activity; therefore, it is a mode of motion. Mind simply is the sum total of one's thinking activities; ergo, it is a system of motion in an animal organism. He drove the thrust home by asserting that to conceive mind as a made of a substance fundamentally different from the corporeal substance was a relic of scholastic occultism. He carried the crusade against dualism further and attacked metaphysical rationalism by including reason in the mental process.

This new theory of human mind is set forth in the *Treatise on Human Nature*, wherein human rationality is traced to reason in nature. Hobbes thus humanised the concept of Natural Law which, having replaced the Providence of Christian teleology, threatened to reduce man to an automaton. While combatting the *quasi* scholastic metaphysics of Descartes, Hobbes' *Treatise on Human Nature* laid down the foundation of the mathematical metaphysics of Isaac Newton (1642-1727), known as the Natural Philosophy which guided the intellectual life of Europe during the next two hundred years of great scientific achievements and material progress. In the realm of natural science, Hobbes' empiricism was more in tune with the general intellectual atmosphere of the time; he did not say actually anything more than Galileo. But his psychology provoked a fierce storm of opposition, which was further inflamed by his apparently cynical social doctrines. Truth however tells; and in the seventeenth century, the European intellect was passionately in search of truth. Therefore, before long, the very opposition to his empirical analysis of mind and reason led to a serious enquiry into the question of the natural springs and rational ground of human action. Sensationalist psychology ushered in a period of ethical speculation, which had been an abeyance since the days of Socrates and the Stoics. At the same time, the new philosophy as expounded by Bacon, Hobbes and the materialist wing of the Cartesian school tended to disown the spirit of the Renaissance. Had man revolted against God to be a slave of nature? Jean Jacques Rousseau's (1712-1778) romanticism replied passionately in the negative.

Though only *quasi* materialist, sensationalism was also a reaction to metaphysical rationalism. Reason could not claim to be the

source of the knowledge of absolute truth without resorting to God, who was to be deposed by rationalism. That was proved by Descartes' relapse into theology. Therefore, its pretensions should be curbed. Sensationalism undertook the task. Locke argued: Know the limits of your understanding; it is madness to attempt to go beyond those limits; on the other hand, it is folly to let in darkness and mystery within those limits, to be incessantly wondering and always assuming that matters can be so plain as they appear, and that something lying deeper courts our attention.³³ That is clear enough. The concepts of pure reason or Metaphysical categories are rejected as mere assumptions. Locke denied the priority of idea, although he stopped short of formally endorsing the out-and-out materialism of Hobbes. The psychological aspect of Descartes' philosophy elaborated by Hobbes and Locke returned to France to be worked up into a philosophy which inspired the great French Revolution. It was a philosophy which merged empiricism into a materialist metaphysics, reconciled the latter with rationalism detached from theology, and proclaimed the sovereignty of man gifted by nature with unlimited power. The revolt of man against God had not been in vain. The successful rebel against super-naturalism was bound to realise that he could conquer nature also. Rationalism gave birth to romanticism—the philosophy of a time when great scientific achievements changed the face of the earth, and fired man with hitherto inconceivable revolutionary ideas and ideals.

The purely rationalist (speculative) aspect of Descartes' philosophy developed in two directions: Neo-scholasticism of Malebranche, and the pantheistic ethical universalism of Spinoza. Through the latter channel, Cartesian rationalism influenced both the main branches of European philosophy—idealist as well as materialist, and also inspired the belated German Renaissance—the romanticism of Herder, Goethe, Schiller and others.³⁴

The most fantastic part of Descartes' metaphysics is the doctrine of human soul—how it comes in contact with the "vital spirits", and how the interaction between soul and body takes place. Seated in the pineal gland, the soul can alter the direction of the motion of the vital spirits, and through them indirectly guide the movements of the body without itself being affected by them. The speculative structure of Cartesian psychology collapsed when physicists discovered that the amount of motion in any given direc-

tion was also constant, and therefore could not be changed. Cartesian dualism became obsolete; the soul could not possibly influence corporeal behaviour. It was thus an utterly unnecessary assumption in psychology. Both Malebranche and Spinoza discarded the Cartesian fantasy, the former maintaining dualism on theological grounds of the scholastic tradition, the latter abandoning dualism to develop a monistic philosophy, which could be interpreted materialistically as well as pantheistically.

Like Descartes, Spinoza also proposed to start from clearly defined and accurately known principles. His method was equally of mathematical reasoning; his whole system was cast in a geometrical form—a perfectly logical pattern, an ideal creation of pure reason. But Spinoza's first principles were not *a priori*, given in consciousness. They resulted from the reason in nature, and could be conceived by human intelligence because it was a manifestation of the universal rationality. The understanding of any phenomenon presupposes understanding of its cause; nothing appears except of necessity. The clear ideas of Spinoza are not *sui generis*; they are clear and true, because they represent objective reality. Being in harmony with reason in nature, human reason is capable of grasping the fundamental truths of existence. Spinoza was a rationalist in the sense that his method was deductive. But in his system, reason ceases to be a metaphysical category, in the transcendental sense; it becomes an ontological entity.

The cardinal principles of Spinoza's philosophy are: (1) Unity of all that exists; (2) Regularity of all happiness; and (3) Identity of nature and spirit. The gordian knot of dualism is cut by postulating a synthesis which Spinoza called God. But in Spinoza's philosophy, God is devoid of all the properties of the traditional God. The ambiguity of the idea of God in Spinoza's philosophy was demonstrated by some condemning him as an atheist and others seeing in him the personification of the purest religion. By the former he was expelled from the Synagogue, whereas, speaking for the German romanticists, Novalis admired him as "a God intoxicated man". It has been remarked that the Jewish rabbis understood Spinoza's philosophy much better than his romantic admirers. Spinoza's God is identical with the rational Universe,³⁵ and as such the ideal of human reason. He regarded the scriptures of religion as creations or primitive human reason, to be appreciated by civilised men as poetry and not as revealed wisdom. He backed

up his interpretation of the scriptures by pointing out the fact that the traditional view was confronted with the irreconcilable conflict with science. His contention was that all the centuries long attempt to establish harmony between rational knowledge and revealed wisdom was futile. Thus, the significance of Spinoza's philosophy was that it proclaimed the independence of human reason.

The synthesis is the one primal principle, extension and thought being its two eternal and infinite attributes; and together they constitute its essence. Spinoza goes a step further, because the dualist fallacy is not resolved by the synthesis; the final state of simplicity is not yet reached; the synthesis is a composite entity. Extension is the basic existence, out of which arise the duplicate manifestations—of matter and mind. Creation is not calling into existence that which had no being out of that which also has no being. Nor is it an inexplicable conjunction of two things existing independent of each other, namely, mind and matter. These arguments flow from the axiom: "No two things can influence and affect each other which have not some property in common." If creation resulted from the spirit acting upon matter, there must be something common in them; they must be essentially the same. Thus, Spinoza reaches the unitary concept of Substance.

Creation is the outflowing of primal energy; it is activity necessary to a self-caused and self-causing existence. Everything is a form of Substance. The corollary to this cosmological conception is the abolition of the Cartesian psycho-physical parallelism in man. Spinoza maintains that body and soul (matter and spirit) are both real. They are not independent entities, but correlative attributes, which constitute the Substance. God and Nature, mind and matter, soul and body, can all be traced to a common denominator—a simple, primal Substance. That supreme principle cannot be the Absolute Spirit; because, then, there could be no creation. therefore, it could only be a Substance having extension, the property of motion being inherent in it. It is a material Substance capable of developing mind.

Not only were cosmology and metaphysics freed from the problem of dualism, which logically merged philosophy into a mystic theology, if not a fundamentalist religion, but also, with the disappearance of the psycho-physical parallelism in man, his relation with nature was clearly traced. Man's body and mind (soul) are

respectively con-substantial with the infinite attributes of Nature—extension and motion. Man as a whole, his body and mind, is a part of nature, the essence of which is the simple primal unitary substance. Nothing super-natural intervenes in the rise of man out of the background of physical nature, just as cosmic creations need no divine creativeness. A part of nature, man's being and becoming are governed by the Natural Law. But just as the operation of the law in external nature can be mathematically traced, the physiology and psychology of man, being subject also to the same law, are equally amenable to a similar treatment. Man's inner life is thus divested of all mysteries. A clear view of man's relation with nature helped the understanding of man, and the understanding further clarified the relation between man and nature.

Spinoza's philosophy is rigorously determinist, as any non-metaphysical naturalism should be. Having explored the teleological view of nature, it freed man from the whims of an inscrutable Providence. But man is a part of nature, and there is no purpose in or will behind the scheme of nature. Does not the corollary rob man also of purposefulness and will? As a matter of fact, Spinoza accepted Hobbes' view of social evolution in which man is reduced to an automaton. Man is deprived of an independent individuality. Human being is a mere mode of the Infinite Existence—a bubble in the eternally flowing stream. The disappearance of a responsible personality renders all set codes of morality pointless. All independence is dissolved by the acid of a stern causality³⁶. There is none even for God, who is without intelligence and will. So, there can be no cosmic purpose or Divine Will. The concept of a free will in man is founded on the assumption of a universal will. Spinoza thus rejects the Christian idea of free will—the freedom to commit sin, or the will which is believed to be an echo of the Divine Will of teleology. That was not a charter of freedom but a voluntary bondage. Human will is desire, and every act of desire has a cause; therefore, no human act is the result of free will in the sense of not having a cause. If an absolute, undetermined, will is abstracted from the various particular acts of desire, then the concept of free will is entirely imaginary, removed from all reality; just as a stone falling through the air may imagine, if it could, that it is doing so out of free will.

Spinoza's determinism thus is far from being fatalistic. The objections to teleological predestination are not valid against rational and scientific determinism. The former fixes the end of existence independently of nature. Rational determinism is naturalistic; the ends of man's life are consonant with his nature, and therefore determined by it. Man's intelligence, desire, will, are in his nature. Natural determinism, as distinct from teleological predestination, therefore, includes the operation of will as well as the other faculties of man. Spinoza repeatedly points out that, since the ends of human existence are the ends of its nature, man is free. In that sense, determinism is self-determination. Man is in bondage to the extent that his life is determined by external causes; he is free to the extent that his life is self-determined.

Spinoza's Ethics, which is the most significant part of his philosophy, is based upon the harmony of the concepts of necessity and freedom. "All things whereof a man is the efficient cause are necessarily good; no evil can befall a man except through external causes." Morality is volitional; in ethics, freedom of will is unrestricted, and it is there that freedom really counts. At the same time, Spinoza traces the roots of morality to the determined processes of the operation of biological faculties. The instinct of self-preservation governs all human behaviour. "No virtue can be conceived as prior to this endeavour to preserve our own being." Spinoza thus laid the stable foundation of a secular ethics by tracing the roots of morality in the evolutionary process. But his doctrine was subjected to an utilitarian interpretation, which discredited the very idea of a secular morality. Ethical relativity of the Utilitarians became moral nihilism in the materialist philosophy of Marx. Meanwhile, the humanist ethics of Spinoza inspired the romantic revolt (German Renaissance) against the rationalised materialism of modern philosophy.

All the great spiritual leaders of Germany in the eighteenth century—Herder (1744-1803), Lessing (1729-1781), Goethe (1749-1832), Schiller (1759-1805)—were followers of Spinoza. Had Spinoza's philosophy really reduced man to an automaton, it could not be so enthusiastically welcomed by those great individualists. They felt that naturalist romanticism was threatening the sovereignty of man proclaimed by the Renaissance. Nevertheless, great humanists themselves, they could not disown the revolutionary achievements of man in the field of natural science. Goethe him-

self had contributed much to those achievements. Therefore, philosophically, they were all more or less inclined towards materialism. Yet, they wanted a "living religion" to satisfy man's emotions. Spinoza's "Synthesis" provided them with a God who did not interfere in human affairs. The pantheistic interpretation of Spinoza's "Soulful Substance" was fully developed in the poetry of Goethe and Schiller. The intellectual life of Europe appeared to be involved in a new internal conflict—between the French Enlightenment and the German Renaissance. The former constructed a thorough-going materialist philosophy on the basis of Cartesian cosmology, and Spinoza's monism. It was set forth brilliantly in Holbach's (1723-89) *System of Nature*, which represented the eighteenth century high-water mark of modern philosophy. But at the same time, it provoked Goethe, a classical man of the Renaissance, to exclaim:

"If after all these books did us any harm, it was that we took a hearty dislike for philosophy and particularly metaphysics; on the other hand, we threw ourselves into living knowledge—experience, action and poetry."

That was the spirit of romanticism, which grew not in opposition to rationalism, but because of it. The bible of rationalist naturalism did no harm; it only forced the German Renaissance to cast off its classicist tendency, and assert with a poetic passion man's creativeness in all the departments of life—science, society and culture. The "living knowledge" advocated by Goethe destroyed whatever was still left of religion in Germany; Spinoza's philosophy survived the attack of the scientific theology of Leibniz (1646-1716). The cardinal principle of the "living knowledge" was rejection of the scholastic dogma resurrected by Leibniz, that "matter cannot think". Kant dealt the final blow to theology and scholastic metaphysics. Goethe called for a complete break with the habit of looking back for inspiration by making Mephistophiles to preach: "Everything was worth because it disappears."

The trail of scientific humanism blazed by Spinoza with the torch of modern philosophy lighted by Bacon, Hobbes and Descartes, was not to be lost in his own pantheism, nor in the quicksand of transcendental Idealism [Leibniz, Kant (1724-1804), Fichte (1762-1814), Schelling (1775-1854)]. It broadened, to strike out in three directions: (1) Classicist Romanticism of the German Renaissance; (2) French Enlightenment; and (3) Dialectic materialism of

Marx (1818-1883) based on Hegel (1770-1811) and Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-72). Modern philosophy is the ideology of no particular class; it is a human creation and therefore a human heritage.

NOTES

1. Dean Hastings Rashdall. *The Universities of Mediaeval Europe* Vol. 1. pp. 368-9.
As for example, the neo-Thomism of our time. "Philosophy is the highest of human sciences, that is, of the sciences which know things by the natural light of reasons. But there is a science above it; it is theology. The word theology means the science of God." (Jacques Maritain, *An Introduction to Philosophy*)
2. See Lynn Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*; Charles H. Hoskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science*; and William C.D. Dampier, *A History of Science*.
3. Rashdall, *The Universities of Mediaeval Europe*.
4. "In the seventeenth century, the Cartesian reform resulted in the severance of philosophy from theology, the refusal to recognise the rightful control of theology and its function as a negative rule in respect of philosophy." (Maritain, *Introduction to Philosophy*).
5. Lewes, *History of Philosophy*.
6. In the modest disguise of the faithful, Bacon went to the extent of suggesting that venerable superstitions should be subjected to the test of human reason. "I have always thought that the two questions of the existence of God and the nature of the soul were the chief of those (questions) which ought to be demonstrated rather by philosophy than by theology, for, although it is sufficient for us, the faithful, to believe in God, and that the soul does not perish with the body, it certainly does not seem possible ever to persuade the infidel unless we first prove to them these two things by natural reason."
8. Frederick Engels, *Feuerbach*.
9. "It was reserved for the first half of the seventeenth century to reap in the sphere of philosophy the ripe fruits of the great emancipation which the Renaissance had secured in turn for the most various departments of man's intellectual life." (A. Lange, *History of Materialism*).
10. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*.
11. See *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 13th Edition.
12. "In the seventeenth century, the Cartesian reform resulted in the severance of philosophy from theology, the refusal to recognise the rightful control of theology and its function as a negative rule in

respect of philosophy. This was tantamount to denying that theology is a science, or anything more than a mere practical discipline, and to claiming that philosophy, or human wisdom, is the absolutely sovereign science which admits no other superior to itself. Thus, in spite of the religious beliefs of Descartes himself, Cartesianism introduced the principle of rationalist philosophy which denies God the right to make known by revelation truths which exceed the natural scope of reason." (Maritain, *An Introduction to Philosophy*).

13. "Several years have now elapsed since I first became aware that I had accepted even from my youth many false opinions for true, and that consequently what I afterwards based on such principles, was highly doubtful. And from that time, I was convinced of the necessity of understanding once in my life to rid myself of all the opinions I had adopted, and of commencing anew the work of building from the foundation." (*Meditations*).
14. The co-founder of modern philosophy, Francis Bacon, for the first time used the phrase "knowledge is power."
15. Descartes did not altogether neglect the method of observation and experiment. He worked hard on refraction and carried on anatomical research to prove that imagination and memory were physical processes. Proudly he used to show to his visitors dissected animal heads and called them more important than books.
16. "Descartes, in addition to the vast intrinsic value of his works, had the immense merit of doing more than any previous writer to divorce philosophy from erudition, and to make it an appeal to the reasoning power of ordinary men.....Descartes more than any one else was the author of what may be called the democratic character of philosophy, and this is not the least of his merits." (W.E.R. Lecky, *The Rise of Rationalism*).
17. *Discourse*.
18. *Principles of Philosophy*.
19. *Ibid*.
20. *Principles*.
21. A. Lange, *History of Materialism*.
22. "It was of the utmost importance for the whole subsequent development of science and philosophy that the place thus reluctantly admitted to mind was pitifully meagre." (E.A. Burt, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Science*).
23. *Principles*.
24. J. Winternitz, *The Theory of Relativity and Epistemology*.
25. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 13th Edition.
26. Lange, *History of Materialism*.
27. "The sharp line Descartes tried to draw between the body and soul explains his doctrine of animals. Thought, he contended, is the essence of soul, and all that is not thought (as life and sensibility) is of the

body. In denying that brutes had souls, he denied them the power of thought." (Lecky, *The Rise of Rationalism*).

28. *Meditations Sacrae*.

29. *Meditations Sacrae*.

30. In his earlier works, Descartes himself attached greater importance to his physical theories than to his metaphysical speculations, claiming objective validity for the former, but not for the latter.

31. Even more than external nature, Hobbes was interested in the phenomena of social life, presenting themselves so impressively in an age of political revolution; he attempted a task which no other adherent of the new mechanistic philosophy conceived—nothing less than such a univesal construction of human knowledge as would bring society and man (at once the matter and maker of society) within the same principles of scientific explanation as were found applicable to the world of nature. (See *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 13th Edition).

32. "He was not able to develop a psychology in terms of mathematical atoms, but he strayed no farther from this method than was necessary; he described the mind as a compound of the elementary parts, produced in the vital organs by the clash of inrushing and outpushing motions, and combined according to simple laws of association. Purpose and reason are admitted, but they appear not as ultimate principles of explanation, which had been their significance for the scholastic psychologists; they represent merely a certain type of phantasm or group of phantasms within the total compound. This treatment set the fashion for almost the whole modern development of psychology. Locke, the next great psychologist, followed Hobbes' method still more explicitly and in greater detail, with the result that after him only an occasional idealist ventured to write a psychology in terms of different main assumptions." (Burt, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Science*).

33. *Human Understanding*.

34. Modern philosophy founded by Bacon, Descartes and Locke, thus, was not the ideology of the rising bourgeoisie. The absurdity of this schematic historicism becomes further evident when it is remembered that through Spinoza, Cartesian Idealism flowed into Hegel's philosophy of Prussianism and also fed Marxist Materialism. It is no wonder that Marx has been characterised as the "Red Prussian."

35. Einstein has also been called a religious mystic because of his poetic attitude to nature, very much similar to Spinoza's.

36. Hegel seized upon this half-truth, and on that basis set up the preposterous doctrine that freedom is the realisation of necessity. Marx applied the Hegelian interpretation of a metaphysical half-truth of Spinoza to the process of social evolution, and expounded his Historical Determinism, according to which moral cynicism is a revolutionary virtue.

Chapter VIII

THE NEW SCIENCE

The hope of salvation by the Grace of God of Christianity helped the Graeco-Roman world survive the breakdown of the pagan civilisation. The new religion further reassured that, pending ultimate redemption man's soul, even during its sojourn in this world, was constantly in the keeping of the benevolent Father in heaven. With the spread of Christianity, the belief in man's relation with God became the sheet-anchor of the cultural life of Europe. The Christian faith largely outgrew its original pessimism, when the end of the world predicted in the Bible did not come at the appointed time. Europe came out of the dark ages with an optimistic view of life derived from the faith in man's living relation with God. The Kingdom of Heaven did not come, according to the original faith, because it is in every Christian who through prayer realises his relation with God at every moment of his life. Imperceptibly, the conception of God changed; the corollary was the mysticism of scholastic theology as against the anthropomorphism of the patristic age.

But the logic of human thought does not always obey the dictates of faith, however much rationalised or mystified may the latter be. Rationalisation of the scholastic theology undermined the fundamentalist faith of the full-blooded Christianity, and thus proved to be the solvent of supernaturalism, the corner-stone of the entire structure of the religious mode of thought. Absolved from the original sin of natural ignorance, human reason outgrew the limitations of its primitive manifestation (religion), and reasserted itself in the rebirth of science and philosophy.

In consequence of the struggle of several hundred years, the intellectual life of Europe succeeded in casting off the illusion of man's relation with God. Naturalism replaced super-naturalism as the fundamental principle of metaphysical speculation. Nature

having taken the place of God, intellectual efforts to penetrate her secrets deposed theology from the proud position of the supreme science which it had occupied for a whole age. Metaphysical thought reared on the basis of an expanding knowledge of nature resulted in the elaboration of a natural philosophy indicating a promising approach to the problem which confronted European intellect on the threshold of the modern time, namely, the problem of man's being and becoming in the context of the physical world. And there was an allied problem, that of discovering the principle which regulates the relation of man to man—the problem of man's being and becoming in the context of the social world. How did the Natural Law operate so as to provide sanction for secular authority? In the last analysis, they were not two problems, but two aspects of the self-same problem—of man's being and becoming free from the illusions of his relation with God. Natural philosophy must be supplemented by a social philosophy, both co-ordinated and harmonised in a system of thought trying to understand and explain existence as a whole.

Man's vision and imagination liberated from the tyranny of theology and the prejudices of super-naturalism led to, an exuberance of intellectual efforts. The new philosophy flourished in various systems built by individual thinkers of genius—Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, to mention only the most outstanding ones. Individualism asserted itself first in the field on philosophical thought.

Geometrical precision and mathematical reasoning guarded the new systems of universal philosophy against the possibility of truth being obscured by superfluous assumptions and irrelevant considerations. But they committed the common error of ignoring factors which defied measurement by the geometrical yardstick, nor could be covered by mathematical equations. Those were human factors constituting the warp and woof of society; and no social philosophy was possible except on the basis of an understanding of the mechanics and dynamics of human relations—of psychology and anthropology.

Descartes tried to establish a relation between physics and psychology. His was an effort to interpret physiological processes in terms of analytical geometry. Eventually, upon the attainment of more accurate knowledge about the vital processes, that method, divested of its naivety, might have been fruitful as far as it went. But by its very nature, it could not be applied to mind proper, to

the operation of thoughts and emotions. The laws of physics stated in terms of analytical geometry could not be applied to the metaphysics of psychology. Psycho-physical parallelism resulted from that failure. Until natural philosophy was freed from the fallacy of Cartesian dualism, its validity for living nature, and particularly for human relations, remained doubtful. Sheer dogmatism was the only way out of the impasse.

Mathematics placed natural philosophy on a sound foundation; but the exponents of naturalism failed to realise that, as a science of numbers, a method of stating propositions quantitatively, mathematics had obvious limitations. Descartes' distinction between the primary and secondary qualities was a bit of sophistry which glossed over the truth that certain aspects of the objective reality could not be described in numerical terms. But for that reason they were not secondary; they belonged as much to the primal substance as the primary qualities. Subsequent development of physics, however, did bring some of the secondary qualities of matter within the scope of mathematical treatment. But a residue remained to make manifest the truth that mathematics is not omniscient.

In the first place, mathematics itself had to keep pace with the penetration of man's mind into the deeper secrets of nature. Secondly, in the process of that growth, mathematics reaches a point where it merges itself in logic; then, the degree of accuracy and exactitude demanded by it is no longer to be measured numerically, but by logical consistency; symbols of mathematical logic do not necessarily have any quantitative value. In the seventeenth century, and for a considerable time to come, mathematics had not yet reached that level of a method of abstract reasoning. It was still a science of numbers, and as such could not be the instrument for describing all the aspects of existence. Consequently, the natural philosophy of that time did not necessarily embrace the whole of nature. A different approach had to be found to the problems of human relations. A new science had still to be born; and the genius of man ushering in a new phase of human development proved equal to the task.

The Aristotelian concept of "natural justice" being ideally valid under all circumstances as the guiding principle of a harmonious social existence, provided the point of departure of the enquiry into the anatomy and physiology of social relations as well as

their genesis. Bodin's *Republic* was the first significant attempt; it was the most systematic and complete treatise on politics composed after Aristotle. The *City of God* was a milestone on the long dreary way, because its author was a learned pagan before he became a devout Christian. But it lost its force when the fundamentalist religion with its faith in an anthropomorphic God gave way to theology. Thomas Aquinas' religious philosophy was an all-embracing system, but in it the problem of human relations was simply non-existent, they being predetermined by teleological rationalism. Nevertheless, the ancient notion of natural justice was retained in the tradition of the Roman Law, which shared with the Canon Law of the Church the governance of mediaeval society. On the authority of that tradition, Renaissance jurists revived the twin concept of "Natural Right", and "Natural Law", which constituted the foundation of the political thought at the close of the Middle-Ages. The formative process culminated in the crystallisation of a set of principles of political government and civil jurisprudence derived from the metaphysical concept of Natural Law.

In the transition period, thinking was necessarily confused by convention, prejudice and fear of orthodoxy. The search for a secular authority was obsessed with conventional notions. Grotius was the first to set aside the scriptural authority and go outside the jurisdiction of the Church in search of a principle of civil rights and a legal basis of society and government. Yet, the distinction between religion, on the one hand, and law and public morality, on the other, was not quite clear in his epoch-making work. Nevertheless, he did enunciate propositions which implied the distinction, to be more clearly grasped by other thinkers who followed him. The law of nature is immutable; God himself cannot alter it any more than He can alter a mathematical axiom. The law is embedded in the nature of man as a social being; therefore, it would be valid in the government of the world according to natural justice, even if there was no God or God did not look after the well-being of his creation.

That was clear enough. But there still remained the question: How did Natural Law operate through men so as to bring them together in a social organisation and thereafter to provide sanction for a secular authority? The question was about the origin of society and State. The autonomy of a secular authority could not be established conclusively, its sanction could not be humanised,

unless it was proved that society originated in human action. The required formulation of sound principles for a harmonious regulation of human relations and an equitable political administration evidently presupposed an evolutionary view of society and a new method of historical research.

Rousseau said: "If one could behold the human race in its embryonic state, one could know something significant about its adult form." He had borrowed the idea from Giambattista Vico, who was the first to approach the problems of historical research from the anthropological and philological point of view. The suggestion that knowledge about the primitive state of the human species would throw light on the problems of civilised society implied an evolutionary view of human history.

The study of history received a strong impetus from the Renaissance. The relation between history and philosophy was a lively topic of the humanist educational theory. It was a generally held opinion that, as against the precepts of philosophy, history is taught by examples and experience. Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* clearly evidenced the shift of emphasis from philosophy to history in the field of education and culture. "Knowledge are as pyramids whereof history is the base." Bolingbroke's famous formula, "History is philosophy teaching by example", was an echo of the humanist educational theory. The next impetus to historical research came from the Reformation, which contributed to the rise of historiography. Luther "was enforced to awake all antiquity, and to call former times to his succour to make a party against the present time; so that the ancient authors, both in divinity and humanity, which had long time slept in libraries, began generally to be read and revalued."¹ To fight the Reformers with their own weapon, the Jesuit Fathers engaged themselves in historical research with their characteristic thoroughness and profundity. Vico was born, educated, and developed his *New Science*² in the kingdom of Naples, an active centre of the Counter-Reformation.

In the seventeenth century, France and England stood at the vanguard of the movement of European intellect. In material progress and political grandeur also, they were ahead of all other nations. Italy, the cradle of the Renaissance, the birthplace of the bourgeoisie, the land of Lionardo, Galileo, Campanella, Bruno, had drifted into the backwaters of history. Papacy had regained supremacy; the Counter-Reformation was rampant. Yet, it was in that atmos-

phere of triumphant reaction that the New Science of humanity was born. to proclaim the most stirring idea of all times—History is Humanity Creating Itself. That is the basic idea of Vico's *New Science*.³

Jacques Benigne Bossuet (1627-1704), who has been bracketed with Vico and Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) as "the historian of humanity", was an older contemporary of Vico. He also was steeped in the tradition of Catholicism, and drew inspiration from the anthropomorphism of St. Augustin as against the religious philosophy of the rationalist Thomas Aquinas. Yet, he was the author of one of the very earliest works on the philosophical interpretation of history. His was the first significant attempt to interpret history as a process determined by causes inherent in itself. He held that God operated "through secondary causes. It is His will that every great change should have its roots in the ages that went before."⁴ Bossuet's work records the highly instructive fact that the determinist view of history logically resulted from the teleological conception, just as the mechanistic view of the physical processes of nature also flowed from the theological doctrine of a law-governed Universe.

The separation of the philosophy of history from religious tradition began with Charles Louis De Secondat Montesquieu, (1689-1755) who was a younger contemporary of Vico. A clearly secular, though metaphysical, conception of the Natural Law was expounded in *Esprit des Loi*. But Montesquieu's earlier book, *Grandeur et Decadence des Romains*, was the first important treatise on the philosophy of history.

These and numerous other minor contributions to historical research and to the development of an evolutionary view of history went in the making of the *New Science*.

The most baffling problem of dogmatic historicism (the Marxist materialist conception of history or Historical Materialism) is to explain its own origin and originator. The anthropological and philological approach to the problems of historical research enabled Vico not only to expound a determinist, evolutionary view of history; but also gave him the distinction of being the first to interpret epoch-making historical events in terms of class struggle.⁵ Yet, the herald of the "revolutionary ideology of the proletariat" was a sincerely religious man, enjoying the patronage of high dignitaries of the Roman Church and also of the rank reac-

tionary Spanish monarchy. Nor could any connection be traced between the undoubtedly revolutionary *New Science* and the rise of the bourgeoisie in revolt against mediaevalism. It was the creation of a typically mediaeval mind.

Like Bossuet, Vico also drew inspiration from the learned pagan who became the tallest personality of the patristic age. He admits that a passage in the *City of God* enabled him to resolve the conflict between his Catholic faith and his philosophy of law which was evidently secular, if not heretical. His object was to establish a "rational civil theology of divine providence" in the place of "natural theology" founded upon a radically deficient philosophy preached by a succession of thinkers from Epicurus to Hobbes, and reinforced by the revival of the physical sciences. Having studied St. Augustine's famous book, Vico saw that "a reinterpretation of the action of Providence in history" would serve his purpose. The reinterpretation was a veritable *tour de force* of the fundamentalist religious mentality; it was a new exegesis of the doctrine of creation: the Biblical doctrine was applicable, in the pre-historic time, only to the Hebrews; the rest of the race, the gentile people, were subject to the "general Providence" (as against the special Grace reserved for the chosen people), which operated through nature and Bossuet's "secondary causes." Thus, Vico arrived at his "rational civil theology of divine Providence". It is rational and civil to the extent that a wide latitude of freedom and choice is conceded to mankind, including the Hebrews, after their emergence from Biblical antiquity. And the *New Science*, tracing the origin of society in primitive human creativeness, is a theology because the self-operating process of social evolution is nonetheless "providential"; therefore, individual efforts with freedom to choose serve a collective purpose, and society as a whole moves towards civilisation.

The religious obsessions of a mediaeval mentality led Vico to believe that his *New Science* was based upon a new exegesis, the inspiration for which came from St. Augustine. In reality, it was founded upon the pioneering efforts of precisely those great thinkers whose supposed errors Vico proposed to rectify, namely, Grotius, Hobbes and other Natural Law theorists, like John Selden (1584-1654) and Baron von Samuel Pufendorf (1632-94). It was from Grotius that Vico learned the very important lesson that philosophy and philology could be combined into a system of universal

law; and the humanist theory of knowledge, which constituted the foundation of the *New Science*, had been outlined by Hobbes. "Of arts, some are demonstrable, others undemonstrable; and demonstrable are those the construction of the subjects whereof is in the power of the artist himself who, in his demonstration, does no more but deduce the consequence of his own operation. The reason whereof is this, that the science of every subject is derived from a prerecognition of the causes, generation and construction of the same; and consequently, where the causes are known, there is place for demonstration. Geometry is demonstrable, for the lines and figures, from which we reason, are drawn and described by ourselves; and civil philosophy is demonstrable, because we make the commonwealth."⁶

The fundamental principle of Vico's *New Science*—history is humanity creating itself—was thus conceived in Hobbes's civil philosophy, which he deduced from the mechanistic natural philosophy of the seventeenth century. Vico's contribution was to demonstrate its operation in history from the very beginning of human society. Bacon had held up ancient Greece and Rome as "exemplar States", presumably founded by recondite philosophers and wise legislators—the archetypal men. Vico showed that "the history of the exemplar States extant in good perfection" was woven by poets with tissues of legends, fables and myths. He further proved that the anthropological and philological approach to the problems of comparative mythology and the "metaphysic of human mind" enabled one to reconstruct the actual history not only of the poetically described (in the epics) Graeco-Roman antiquity, but also of the prehistoric age.

"In the night of thick darkness which envelops the earliest antiquity, there shines the eternal and never fading light of truth: that the world of human society has certainly been made by man, and its principles are therefore to be found within the modifications of our own human mind."⁷

The painstaking search that led the lonesome scholar in a medieval school of law to the discovery of the master-key to the problems of human history was inspired by a lesson learned from Grotius, Pufendorf and, above all, Hobbes, "that the first founders of civil society were not philosophers filled with recondite wisdom, as he had hitherto thought, but man—beasts devoid of culture or humanity, yet guided by an obscure instinct of self-

preservation that in time would draw them into social compact and thus lay the foundation stone of civilisation."⁸

The inspiring lesson learned from his predecessors who had revived the ancient concept of Natural Law as the sanction for the revolt against the agelong domination of theology and the teleological view of life, reminded Vico of what he had read in the great poem of Lucretius—about the origin of society. In his youth, Vico came under the influence of the "new philosophy" which flourished in certain secret circles of the Neapolitan society, as a whole haunted by the shadow of the Inquisition. In the olden days, Naples was the main centre of Epicureanism in Italy. Drawing upon that tradition as well as the more recent of Bruno and Campanella, "the new philosophy" was "Epicurean and atheist". Some of Vico's friends of that time were actually hauled before the Inquisition for having held the view that "before Adam, there were men who were composed of atoms, as all animals were; and the shrewder among them began to build houses, farms, forts and cities", so on and so forth.⁹ In his Epicurean mood, Vico wrote a poem¹⁰ on the Lucretian style, most unbecoming for a devout Christian, although later in his life, having found inspiration in St. Augustine, he betrayed the bad taste of disparaging Lucretius. Nor did his religious atavism allow him to stop at that; he claimed to have developed his *New Science* independently of all the philosophers from Epicurus to Hobbes. But that was an excusable vanity on the part of a lonesome scholar, who was frustrated in his academic ambition.

However, the sequence of historical facts is that Pierre Gassendi (1592-1655) revived the Epicurean tradition in Western Europe; Hobbes incorporated it in modern philosophy; and Vico took up the threads from Hobbes as also from Grotius, to weave them into the outline of a new science—of history and society. Vico's critique of the concept of Natural Law was not corrective; it brought out the implication of the doctrine. So long as it remained a philosophical abstraction, it was impossible to demonstrate how Natural Law affected human life. Vico opposed his doctrine of the "Natural Law of the peoples" to the "Natural Law of the philosophers", and showed, in the revealing light of his new method of enquiry into historic and prehistoric antiquity, that the universal law of the peoples grew naturally with the growth of society; and therefore it was the only natural law as far as human life, individual and col-

lective, was concerned. Human society, regarded as an organism, was placed in the context of the mechanistic processes of physical nature.

Vico traced the origin of law in the human mind, and explained historical changes in terms of the evolution of man's mind, which was itself a natural process. Therefore, he came to the conclusion that, if physicists sought to discover laws of nature by the study of natural phenomena, philosophers must seek the laws of historical change and social evolution in the events of human life and in an understanding of the operation of the human mind. Laws are born in the conscience of mankind. In the earlier stages of social evolution, they are conceived as codes and rituals of religion, because the primitive man is incapable of thinking in terms of abstract ideas. The original obscure idea of law becomes clearer and better defined in course of time, in proportion with the growth of the human mind. Finally, the conception of law is abstracted from concrete religious forms which are thus replaced by rational philosophical principles. The critique of the metaphysical doctrine of Natural Law thus leads Vico to the position of Grotius. The difference is that he reaches there analytically. With Grotius, Natural Law is an hypothesis; for Vico, it is an empirical fact. And that was certainly a great advance—but in the same direction.

According to Vico, the concept of law passes through three successive stages—the divine (religious), the heroic (of the epics) and the human (civil). The last stage in substance is merely the abstract philosophical expression of the sense of justice, co-operation and harmony felt vaguely by the progenitors of the human race. Thus, Vico discovered an enduring principle of universal law, revealed in his *New Science*—concerning the nature (genesis) of nations, from which has issued their humanity (civilisation), which in every case began with religion and was completed by sciences."¹¹ In the same place, Vico indicates the link between the conclusions of his predecessors and his own discovery: "The gentile nations have arisen from the ferine wanderings of Hobbes' licentious and violent men, of Grotius' solitary, weak and needy simpletons, of Pufendorf's vagrants cast away into this world without divine care or help".

The *New Science* solved the difficulty of establishing the relation between the two stages of human existence—between the primitive and the civilised. That was indeed a great achievement; only, Vico did that not by going ahead of his predecessors, but

by a recoil from his original Epicurean position, from which the *New Science* could be logically deduced, by setting up the anachronistic doctrine of a "civil theology of divine providence". The gratuitous introduction of a rationalised teleology, however, does not minimise the historical significance of Vico's philosophy of law and history. It logically compelled him to make irrelevant interpolations, which lent the *New Science* to the most reactionary interpretations directly contrary to its native spirit.

The defect of the system of Grotius was to hold on to the Roman idea of a parallel development of the Natural and Positive Law. The latter was man-made; but what was its sanction? Having disputed the divine origin of mankind and society, he left Positive Law hanging in the air. There remained a hiatus between the rationally conceived Natural Law and the man-made Positive Law. Vico bridged the gulf. "The Positive Law of all nations, throughout history, is a continual advance, keeping pace with the progress of civilisation, towards the philosophic conception of a Natural Law founded upon the principles of human reason and nature". The concept of a universal Natural Law thus was an abstraction from the experiences of human life; it was a creation of human nature and reason. That is why Vico started from the proposition that the idea of law originated in man's conscience.

The basic discovery of the *New Science*, that history is humanity creating itself, and Vico's unfounded claim that his discovery represented a break with the tradition of the philosophical concept of Natural Law, were hailed by the nineteenth century post-revolutionary romanticists as a revolt against rationalism, and the scientific justification of their mystic neo-catholic doctrines. This tendentious interpretation of Vico's philosophy is backed up by the far-fetched argument that his reconstruction of the development of society and civilisation was made possible by the discovery that "the first gentile peoples were poets who spoke in poetic characters", and that he called this discovery "the master-key". On this thin evidence, a sweeping judgment is pronounced. "It is at this point that we can observe most clearly that transition from rationalism to historicism, in Vico's own mind, which took place in the thought of Europe generally in the century after his death."¹²

The superficiality of the judgment is evident. Historicism is to interpret social evolution as a determined process; it is application of rationalism to the study of history. Vico exactly did that.

Yet, he is hailed as a mighty rebel against rationalism.

"From Lucretius, Bacon and the Natural Law theorists, Vico derived suggestions which had an irresistible appeal to a mind struggling to free itself from the last remaining shackles of intellectualism. Certainly, to posit as the founders of civilisation not sages but brutes; to posit as the primitive and therefore basic forms of apprehension not reason but instinct, feeling, intuition; to posit as the primitive and basic modes of generalisation not the universals of science and philosophy, but those of poetry—was to emancipate oneself at last from Descartes, and give a new dignity to those philological and historical disciplines which he had despised as resting on inferior cognitive faculties."¹³

At the time of Vico, one might have differentiated reason from instinct, feeling and intuition, regarding the former as a metaphysical category and the latter as concrete human attributes. To-day, such a distinction is scientifically untenable, although there are philosophers who insist on living in the ivory tower of their obscurantism. Vico was a critic of metaphysical rationalism, and as such humanised reason; thereafter, the entire course of his *New Science*, barring the irrelevant second-hand interference of Providence, is strictly rationalist; it interprets the origin of society and its subsequent development as causally determined. Therefore, he must be recognised as the founder of historicism, which was elaborated, in a grossly one-sided manner, by Karl Marx more than a hundred years after Vico's death, as the dialectics of history or Historical Materialism.

"Vico dared attempt to ford the quagmire of metaphysics, and although he was bogged down, he gave footing to a more fortunate thinker (Montesquieu) on the spirit of the laws of the nations." [Denis Diderot (1713-84)]. Vico was the first to interpret history so as to show that heroes and great men are the products of their time, which can be understood properly only by referring it back to the events of preceding epochs. "He interpreted the heroic and divine figures of primitive history as ideas and symbols." (Michelet). Hailing Vico as one of the "historians of humanity" (with Bosuet and Herder), Victor Cousin said: "The fundamental character of the *New Science* is the introduction into history of a point of view purely human."¹⁴

Those authoritative pronouncements, to which many more could be added, summarise the correct appraisal of Vico's philosophy

and his place in the intellectual history of modern Europe. He reconciled rationalism with humanism, and, therefore, could be called the harbinger of an intellectual movement which tempered rationalist metaphysics and mechanistic naturalism with faith in the creativeness of man. He promoted the humanist resurgence in the revolutionary romanticism of Rousseau and also in the aesthetic exuberance of the German Renaissance.

At the same time, it was only natural that the mediaeval mentality of Vico should riddle his *New Science* with irrelevant and atavistic interpolations which could be picked up and given undue importance by tendentious interpreters. Having lived all his life in a place which at that time happened to be outside the main currents of European progress,¹⁵ social as well as intellectual, Vico and his epoch-making work remained practically unknown outside his native country. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, Goethe and Herder visited Italy and got some general ideas of Vico's work. At the same time, Berthold Georg Niebuhr (1776-1831) and Savigny Karl von Friedrich during their Roman visits also came to know of Vico. Thereafter, Vico's ideas spread in Germany, and their doubtful aspects influenced the post-Kantian philosophy, not excluding Hegel's philosophy of law and history. Through Hegel, Vico's organic view of history went into the making of the Marxist materialist conception of history, and later on provided a scientific sanction for Fascist totalitarianism.¹⁶ It has been maintained that Vico was "the true precursor of all German thought"; Kant and Hegel became popular in Italy because it was but an elaboration of Vico's ideas.¹⁷

But it was thanks to Victor Cousin (1792-1867) and his brilliant pupil, Jules Michelet (1798-1874), that Vico and his work gained European recognition. "Nowhere out of Italy has Vico been studied with so much sympathy as in France. What of European reputation he possesses, is very largely due to Michelet's *Oeuvres Choies de Vico*."¹⁸ While, on the one hand, Vico's philosophy was hailed by revolutionary thinkers like Michelet and Marx, his Christian piety and supposed anti-rationalism commended it also to the neo-catholicism of Joseph Marie de Maistre (1754-1821)—the prophet of post-revolutionary Romanticism, just as later on his authority was annexed by Fascism, the post-revolutionary reaction of the twentieth century.

"But neither Duni nor anyone else who borrowed this or that

from Vico in the pre-revolutionary period was able to free himself altogether from the prevailing rationalist temper, to grasp Vico's thought as an integral whole, or even to place him at its living centre. Not until the Enlightenment had run its full course, not until a social movement arose for which Vico's historical vision was a vital necessity, was there wide-spread serious study and adequate comprehension of it. This movement was the post-revolutionary reaction whose foremost representatives were the Federalists in America, Burke in England, De Maistre in France and Vincenzo Cuoco in Italy."¹⁹

Duni and Cuoco were among the principal interpreters of Vico in Italy. Vico's philosophy, of course, was a much discussed topic in his native land before it gained continental reputation. The controversy over the ferine origin of the gentile humanity began during Vico's lifetime. Duni was the leader of the opinion which defended Vico's doctrine. The opposing school was led by Finetti, a Dominican monk. He successfully exposed that, despite Vico's scholastic attempt to buttress his *New Science* on an arbitrary exegesis it was essentially irreligious. He very correctly argued that to hold that society originated in a feral state of the human species, and that internal dialectics governed its subsequent evolution, was to repudiate the authority of the Bible and to pull down the entire structure of Catholic thought. He also pointed out that the *New Science* was imbued with Epicureanism as expounded by Lucretius. Nevertheless, Cuoco, who came to be recognised as the ablest interpreter of Vico, opposed the Neapolitan revolution of 1799 on the ground that the revolutionary philosophy, which resulted from the *New Science* had no roots in the Italian soil, the national philosophy expounded by Machiavelli and Vico having in advance rejected the abstract rationalism of the Enlightenment. And Croce, mainly responsible for the neo-Hegelian interpretation of Vico, calls Cuoco's work as "the first vigorous manifestation of Vicoean thought", which he describes as "anti-abstract and historical, the beginning of the new historiography founded on the conception of the organic development of peoples, and of the new politics of national liberalism, at once revolutionary and moderate."²⁰

In spite of his having anticipated Marx by more than a century as the founder of dialectic historicism, in our time Vico was monopolised by the opposite brand of totalitarianism. The over-riding conception of the universal law of nations did not preclude Vico

from endowing particular nations with "eternal properties" which determine that the nature of each shall be such and not otherwise. The chauvinistic cult of national genius can be easily deduced from this doctrine. Vico's cyclical theory of history associated with reactionary social ideas could logically lead to Spenglerism—the Downfall of the West; its similarity with Sorokin's revivalist doctrine of culture-cycles is also remarkable.

The three recurring cycles of history are "the age of gods", "the age of heroes" and "the age of man". Having described the age of man as "the vindication of the rational nature of man", Vico gives vent to amazingly reactionary social ideas which rule out the possibility of democracy, to justify the cyclical theory. By declaring that the natural law of the peoples of the seventeenth century was the product of the second "age of man", Vico anticipated Spengler's gloomy oracle.

Croce interpreted the *New Science* as a sanction for nationalism, and dedicated his book on the philosophy of Vico to the would-be Nazi philosopher Windelband. Lecturing at Heidelberg on philosophy of history during the first world war, the latter contrasted Vico as the historian of national culture with the cosmopolitan Herder. "Specially interesting in Vico is his cyclical theory of historical process, with its *corsi* and *recorsi*, and very acute and just in his observation that once a people has risen from barbarism to civilisation, it falls back into a new barbarism which is worse than the first. We are to-day in an excellent position to confirm his observation by the comparative method, since we have to do with the sort of barbarism in our antagonists on the one side (Russia) and with other countries on the other (France and England)."

Vico would certainly turn in his grave if he heard his present-day followers. With Georges Sorel (1847-1922), he became the recognised philosopher of Fascism. "National-Socialist scholarship followed the lead of (Italian) Fascism in deriving their common philosophy from Vico and Sorel."

This irony of Vico's fate logically follows from reading in the *New Science* a revolt against rationalism. The Marxists are afraid of claiming his historicism as their heritage because it has already been captured by their opponents. But the humanist philosophy of history founded by Vico on the basis of the Epicurean tradition and the pioneering works of Bacon, Hobbes, Grotius and others, must be rescued from tendentious misrepresentations and super-

ficial expositions. History is humanity creating itself; man makes his own history—these are declarations which must be written in letters of gold in the charter of human freedom. They were pronounced by man's reason, free from spiritual slavery, as reaffirmations of his faith in himself. The philosophy of history as formulated by Vico harmonises Humanism with naturalism, freedom with determinism, will with reason, Romanticism with rationalism. Vico consciously was not a man of the Renaissance. Nevertheless, he made a science of Humanism. The *New Science* of history was a creation of the revolt of man. From the declaration that "the social world is certainly the work of man", Vico deduced the corollary which is the fundamental principle of modern democracy. "And governments must be conformable to the nature of the governed; governments are even a result of that nature".

Vico's ideas, being in tune with the spirit of the age, had imperceptibly flown into the main currents of European life before he was discovered and misrepresented by the post-revolutionary romanticists. Through Rousseau, they inspired the French Revolution which defied reason. On the other hand, Herder had come in touch with them before he began the construction of a philosophy of the history of humanity. But Herder had started thinking by himself, and developed his philosophy of history independently of Vico, rejecting the weak points of the latter's historiography, which laid him open to reactionary interpretations. If Bossuet, Vico and Herder were the historians of humanity, philosophically, Herder was the greatest of them all. In him, the genetic or historical method of studying the complicated structure of human culture reached a logically consistent form. He traced the origin of civilisation to primitive human impulses; but though himself the pioneer of romanticism in Germany, Herder did not share Rousseau's idealisation of the simplicity and spontaneity of the primitive. On the other hand, he rejected the "civil theology of Divine Providence" invented by Vico's mediaeval mentality and religious atavism. In his search for the genesis of human society, Vico did not penetrate deep enough into the origin of languages; he only stated the fact that the primitive spoke in poetic characters. Herder discovered the great truth that the origin of articulate speech marks the rise of the *homo sapiens*, and, rejecting the venerable belief that it was a divine gift, traced it to the mental evolution which

differentiates the human from earlier biological species. "Without discovering language, human mind could not be what it is".

Romanticism did not blind Herder to another great truth of human history; rejecting the theory of fear, popularised by Hume, he held that religion was the creation of primitive rationalism; it was the first attempt of mankind to explain natural phenomena. The deep-seated moral feelings of mankind provided the vitality to the higher forms of religion. The success of Christianity, according to Herder, was due to the fact that it was essentially humanist. He interpreted it as a system of morality. Of course, all great religions, Islam for example, cannot be explained so very simply. But the central idea of Herder's philosophy of religion is that it is associated with human mind in certain stages of evolution; and that is a correct idea, historically as well as psychologically.

As regards the process of human evolution as a whole, Herder's view was rigorously naturalistic, free from Vico's postulate of Biblical exegeses and civil theology. He regarded man as a part of nature, and all the variegated forms of his development, mental, spiritual, physical, as natural processes. On the other hand, he disagreed with Kant's view that human development was the gradual manifestation of the growing faculty of rational free will revolting against the operations of nature. Thus, Herder was opposed to metaphysical rationalism. He rejected the mystic notion that there is an antagonism between human reason and physical nature, and held that, a part of nature, man, derived his reason as well as the freedom to will, from nature. "Human history is a pure natural history of human powers, actions and propensities, modified by time and place."

The scientific thought of the nineteenth century was deeply influenced on the one hand by the rationalism (mechanistic naturalism) of the Enlightenment and, on the other hand, by the no less rational romanticism as developed by Herder. Both the thought-currents carried the positive aspects of Vico's *New Science*, which was thus intergrated in the general pattern of modern democratic culture. Its doubtful and clearly reactionary features also flowed into parallel channels, one to be bogged in the backwaters of the post-revolutionary neo-Catholic Romanticism, and the other, through Hegel, to feed the mutually antagonistic cults of totalitarianism, Communist and Fascist.

Having survived the post-revolutionary reaction in France, and

the *Sturm und Drang* of the German Renaissance, the truths discovered by Vico were left to be perverted by Marxist dogmatism and subsequently to be vulgarised by the regimented fascist scholarship. In Germany, it succumbed to the anti-intellectual reaction to Hegelian fever fantasies. But the "very small school of historical writings, which began in the eighteenth century with Vico, was continued by Condorcet, Herder, Hegel and Comte, and which found its last great representative in Henry Thomas Buckle.(1821-62)"

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the conservative academic circle in England abandoned the time honoured doctrine that history was a branch of literature. Robert Flint's (1838-1910) *History of the Philosophy of History* was an epoch-making book. He never wrote the second volume "to trace with fulness and in detail the effects of Vico's historical speculations". Instead, he wrote a small treatise specially on Vico, which for the first time introduced the *New Science* directly to the English intellectual world. The Darwinian doctrine having revealed the animal origin of the human species, the evolutionary view of history was empirically established. As a matter of fact, the theory that the foundation of society was laid not by wise law-givers, but man-beasts living in a feral state, logically implied the Darwinian doctrine of descent. "The evolutionary theory in science and the historical method (historicism) are twin developments of the same fundamental movement in thought which characterised the mental climate of the nineteenth century."

Henry Hallam (1777-1859) and Edward Gibbon (1737-94) were not philosophers of history; but they were among the first who wrote history according to the new philosophy. Gibbon judged civilisation and progress by the criterion of the happiness of man, and held that political freedom was the essential condition of human happiness. Hallam's conception of history embraced the whole movement of society. Academic historians like John Bagnell Bury (1861-1927), John Linton Myres (1869-1954), Frederick York Powell (1850-1904), Charles Harding Firth (1857-1936), walked in the footsteps of their illustrious predecessors when they applied to their subject the evolutionary view of science in general.

"The growth of historical study in the nineteenth century has been determined and characterised by the same general principle which has underlain the simultaneous developments of the

study of nature, namely the genetic idea. The historical conception of nature, which has produced the history of the solar system, the story of the earth, the genealogies of telluric organisms, and has revolutionised natural science, belongs to the same order of thought as the conception of human history as a continuous genetic causal process—a conception which has revolutionised historical research and made it scientific. The present condition of the human race is simply and strictly the result of a casual series—a continuous succession of changes where each stage arises causally out of the preceding; and the business of historians is to trace this genetic process, to explain each change, and ultimately to grasp the complete development of humanity."²⁹

"History, in its common and more popular sense, is the study of man's dealings with other men, and the adjustment of working relations between human groups. But there is a large sense in which human history merges in natural history, and studies the dealings of man with nature. Man's prehistory merges in the pageant of the animal world."³⁰

History "deals with the condition of masses of mankind living in a social state. It seeks to discover the laws that govern this condition and bring about changes we call progress and decay, and development and degeneration—to understand the process that gradually or suddenly make up or break up those political and economic agglomerations we call States—to find out the circumstances affecting the various tendencies that show their power at different times."³¹

"History is not easy to define; but to me it seems the record of the life of societies of men, of the changes which those societies have gone through, of the ideas which have determined the actions of those societies, and of the material conditions which have helped or hindered their development."³²

These are opinions of "bourgeois historians" as the Marxists would call them. But none of them "finds the birthplace of history in the mitsy cloud formations of heaven" (Marx), nor can they be placed among the gentlemen whom Marx ridiculed for trying to understand history out of the context of the relations of man to nature. This general acceptance of the evolutionary view of history proves, in the teeth of Marxist intolerance, that science has no class affiliation; that the dynamics of ideas, being manifestation of the Natural Law through human intelligence, unfolds itself

independently of the sequence of the physical events of history. This autonomy of the world of thought is the foundation of the spiritual (in the secular sense) freedom—the highest ideal of human existence.

The movement of thought initiated by Grotius and Hobbes, given a wider scope by Vico, and raised on a higher philosophical level by Herder, indicated the theoretical approach to the problems of social relations which challenged human ingenuity at the dawn of modern times. The experience of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries demonstrated the creativeness of man in his relation to nature as well as in the social and political fields. That was an epoch of revolutions—scientific, social and political; and the very idea of revolution is romantic; it claims for man the right to change the conditions of life. It is also rational to the extent that social changes take place of necessity. Therefore, the revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were heralded by the "Age of Reason."

NOTES

1. Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*.
2. *Principles of A New Science of the Nature of Nations, from which are derived New Principles of the Natural Law of Peoples*, by Giambattista Vico, published at Naples in 1725.
3. The signal achievement of Vico was not only brilliant imagination and the conception of history as man-made, the expression of the human spirit shaping environment in a pattern of development and decline, but to apprehend the role of the masses and the unconscious wisdom of the race. (See Emergy Neff, *The Poetry of History*).
4. *Discourse Sur L'Histoire Universale*.
5. "The vindication of the rational nature of man as man was an historical process, the same process by which the rationality was achieved; and the main spring of the process was the dialectical opposition of classes." (Introduction to the *Autobiography of Giambattista Vico*, translated by M.H. Fish and T.G. Bergin).
6. Hobbes, *De Cive*.
7. *New Science*.
8. Fish and Bergin, *Introduction to Vico's Autobiography*.
9. *Ibid*.
10. Quoted from the records at the National Library of Naples by H.P. Adams in *The Life and Writings of Giambattista Vico*.

11. Synopsis of the work prefixed to it.
12. Fisch and Bergin, Introduction to *Vico's Autobiography*.
13. Ibid.
14. Lectures on the history of Philosophy, at the Sorbonne in 1828.
15. Voltaire first broke the Jewish-Christian frame-work of history. He inaugurated the history of ideas, drew into general history the arts and literature, and made gestures in the direction of social and economic history. By obliterating the distinction between the sacred and the profane, he brought a new kind of unity into the study of the past. Like many historians, he felt the precariousness of civilisation. Vico had already carried this emancipation farther, but his surroundings were unpropitious. (Emery Neff, *The Poetry of History*).
16. Vico and Mazzini are "the two greatest forerunners of Fascism." (Mairo Palmieri, *The Philosophy of Fascism*).
17. Bertrando Spavento, *Italian Philosophy in Its Relation to European Philosophy*.
18. Robert Flint, *Vico*.
19. Fisch and Bergin, Introduction to *Vico's Autobiography*.
20. Benedetto Croce, *Philosophy of Giambattista Vico*.
21. *Autobiography*.
22. But the age of men ran its course too. The discipline, respect for law, and social solidarity of the Patrician Orders gave way to a humane and easy tolerance. Philosophy took the place of religion. Equality led to licence. There was dispersion of private interests and decline of public spirit. The meanest citizen could press the public force into the service of his appetites and whims, or sell his vote to the highest bidder among faction leaders and demagogues. In this last phase of "the age of men", humanisation and softening of customs and law continued, until breakdown within or conquest from without brought on a reversion to barbarism, and a new cycle of the three ages began The natural law of the philosophers of the seventeenth century was a product of the second "age of men": (Fish and Bergin, *Introduction to Vico's Autobiography*).
23. Windelband, *Kant-Studien*.
24. Walter Witzennmann, *Politischer Atavismus und Sozialer Mythos*
25. "It is this deep conviction that changing phenomena have unchanging laws which, in the seventeenth century, guided in a limited field Bacon, Descartes and Newton; which, in the eighteenth century, was applied to every part of the material Universe; and which it is the business of the nineteenth century to extend to the history of the human intellect. This last department of enquiry we owe chiefly to Germany; for, with the single exception of Vico, no one even suspected the possibility of arriving at complete generalisations respecting the progress of man, until shortly before the French Revolution,

when the great German thinkers began to cultivate this, the highest and most difficult of all studies." (Buckle, *Introduction to the History of Civilization*).

26. "Turgot made an admirable application of the idea of humanity to history in his Discourses at the Sorbonne. The same idea is implied throughout in Lessing's Essay on *The Education of the Human Race*. Herder's genial and eloquent *Ideen Zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* made its significance popularly appreciated and definitely gave it its rightful position in historical science". (Flint, *History of the Philosophy of History*).
27. Leckey, *History of Rationalism*.
28. A.L. Rowse, *The Use of History* - Introduction to the "Teach yourself History" series published by the English Universities Press.
29. J.B. Bury, *Selected Essays*.
30. Sir John Myers, *The Dawn of History*.
31. York Powell, quoted by A.L. Rowse.
32. Sir Charles Firth, quoted by A.L. Rowse.

Chapter IX

THE ENLIGHTENMENT

The eighteenth century is known in history as the Age of Reason; at the same time, during that period of great significance, rationalism definitely broke away from its metaphysical tradition, and assumed a meaning almost identical with Romanticism, which was the other characteristic feature of the intellectual life of that epoch of decisive events. While a rapidly increasing expansion of scientific knowledge reinforced the belief in the unvarying laws of nature, it also became a prevailing belief that reason was equally applicable to human affairs, and that, rationally regulated, they would lead to universal good. Not only was man capable of solving all the riddles of the Universe, of penetrating deeper and deeper into the secrets of nature, freed from ignorance, prejudices and superstitions, human intelligence could also find the ways and means for a rational, and therefore harmonious, regulation of social relations. Reason was no longer only a subject of philosophical discussions; it was to become the regulating factor of practical life.

It was a period of great intellectual activity; the freedom of thought, naturally amongst those capable of thinking, practically knew no bounds. Scientific investigation was breaking up new grounds; daring ideas were conceiving new possibilities of moral and material progress; bolder imagination was opening up new vistas of freedom to be enjoyed in all the aspects of human life. The outstanding figures of that period of intellectual ferment and emotional exuberance all believed in the unlimited possibility of science and relied on human reason as the only reliable guide in life. On the one hand, Voltaire's eclecticism never transgressed the common ground of agreement; and on the other, the prophet of irrationalism, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, believed that in his doctrine of social contract he had found a rational sanction for politics. As a matter of fact, those two utterly discordant personalities,

between themselves, represented the spirit of the Age of Reason; the almost classicist rationalism of the one and the unbridled romanticism of the other were the two poles of the axis on which the world of eighteenth century Europe revolved.

The triumphal march of science, however, was the inexhaustible source of inspiration for the intellectual life of the eighteenth century. Newton's law of gravitation seemed to solve all the problems of celestial mechanics. Not only in physics, a good deal of knowledge about the life of plants and animals was derived from the researches of Carolus Linnaeus (1707-78) and Comte de Geogre Louis Leclerc Buffon (1707-88). Antoine Lourent Lavoisier (1743-94) and Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) laid the foundation of modern chemistry. Descartes' theory of the vortices failed to stand the test of mathematics as further developed by Maupertuis (1698-1759), d'Alembert and many others. The reconsideration of Cartesian cosmology, compelled by the subsequent expansion of knowledge of physical reality and improvement of mathematical technique, led to a progressive development of the mechanistic view until Laplace (1749-1827) dispensed with the hypothesis of a prime mover.

The powerful influence of Pliere Bayle was another factor which helped eighteenth century rationalism transcend the limitations of Descartes' metaphysics. Bayle was a Cartesian, but bolder than the master. With Descartes, science and religion were not inconsistent; reason and faith went hand in hand. Bayle pointed out the inconsistency. He wielded the Cartesian weapon of scepticism with a greater skill, and inerrability. In the *Critical and Historical Dictionary*, there is indeed no open attack upon religion; but every line was intended to awaken doubt. Bayle was the first to maintain that morality could be entirely independent of religion. Even Voltaire's causticity would not go that far, although he was profoundly influenced by "the master of doubt", as Bayle was called. The campaign for the freedom of thought initiated by Bayle was fought out "under the generalship of Voltaire.... The revolution was prepared in the seventeenth century by the European publicity of the writings of Bayle".¹

By the eighteenth century, naturalism could call itself a scientific system of thought. It was possible to generalise the empirical knowledge of nature, acquired by the different branches of science, into a philosophy. Until then, natural philosophy was one-sided,

based only on physics. In the eighteenth century, it was greatly reinforced by a growing volume of knowledge of the animate world including the anatomy and physiology of the human body. With the broadened basis of scientific knowledge, Sensationalism became the generally accepted form of natural philosophy. Etienne Bonnot Condillac (1715-80) went beyond Locke and rejected reflexion as a source of knowledge. He traced the root of all knowledge to a single origin. The object of his system - improved and amplified Sensationalism - was "to show how all our knowledge and all our faculties are derived from sensations". Locke had doubted the Cartesian doctrine of innate ideas; but his own theory of knowledge was not quite clearly differentiated, since it recognised reflexion as a source of knowledge. Condillac freed Sensationalism from that ambiguity. He discarded the doctrine of the immateriality of mind, and held that mind was nothing but a faculty of sensation, out of which all faculties evolved as the result of the impact of external objects on the senses. Following Gassendi and Hobbes, he identified knowledge with sensation, and maintained that inferences drawn from the examination of animal organisms were applicable in observation of human mind.² The other cardinal feature of Condillac's scientific naturalism was to deny that there was any innate faculty. He wrote: Locke "has certainly thrown a good deal of light on the subject (cognition) but he has left some obscurity. All the faculties of the soul appeared to him as innate qualities; he never suspected that they might be derived from sensation itself."³

Condillac thus suggested that the enquiry regarding the nature and function of mind or soul should be conducted not as previously on the plane of metaphysical speculation, but as a physiological study; in other words, psychology must be regarded as a part of physiology. That was a very bold suggestion to make even in the iconoclastic Age of Reason. The English physician, David Hartley (1705-57) followed up the pointer, and made the first attempt to explain psychological phenomenon as a process of the physiological mechanism. Newton's opinion that the cause of sensation was vibration of ether added to the impetus of the enquiry.

Postulating that "man consists of two parts, the body and mind", Hartley tried to find the relation between them; his investigations led to the conclusion that mental phenomena were produced by the vibration of ether (pervading the nerve-pores) caused by the

impact of external objects. Impinging on the senses, the latter cause vibrations of the infinitesimally small particles of the medullary substance which constitutes the brain, spinal marrow and the nerves. Hartley identified the medullary substance as "the immediate instrument of sensation". Sensations are produced by its vibrations; ideas and actions are transformations of the sensations which are processes in the physiological mechanism. On the basis of this analysis, Hartley maintained: "If that species of motion we term vibratiuon, can be shown by probable argument to attend upon all sensations, ideas and motions, then we are at liberty to make vibrations the exponent of sensations, ideas and motions, however impossible it may be to discover in what way vibrations cause sensations and ideas, that is, though vibrations be of a corporeal, and sensations and ideas of a mental nature. It is sufficient for me that there is a certain connection of one kind or other between sensations of the soul and the motions excited in the medullary substance of the brain."⁴

The enquiry was continued by Erasmus Darwin, (1731-1802), grand-father of Charles Darwin. And Francis Galton, defined idea as "contraction or motion or configuration of the fibres which constitute the immediate organs of sense, synonymous with sensual motion in contradistinction to muscular motion."⁵ He made the first attempt to clear away the confusion created by the sensationalist doctrine of images. "If our recollection or imagination be not a repetition of animal movements, I ask, in my turn, what is it? You tell me it consists of images or pictures of things. Where is this extensive canvas hung up—or where are the numerous receptacles in which these are deposited? Or to what else in the animal system have they any similitude? That pleasing picture of objects, represented in miniature on the retina of the eyes seems to have given rise to this illusive oratory! It was forgotten that this representation belongs rather to the laws of light than to those of life; and may with equal elegance be seen in the *camera obscura* as in the eye; and that the picture vanishes for ever when the object is withdrawn."⁶

This bold approach to the problem of cognition discarded the notion that there was some sort of a spiritual agency in man to receive impressions and transform them into sensations. The implication of Darwin's challenging argument is that ideas are produced

in a long complicated physiological process, which is initiated in the mechanism of the nervous system by external objects impinging on the sense organs.

In Condillac, the sensationalist philosophy reached its high-water mark. But even then, it was not free from its basic defect, namely, the limited significance (of immediacy and directness) of the very term sensation. The result of the defect was the failure to take into account previously stored impressions (instincts) transmitted through heredity. The defect compelled Sensationalism to admit the existence of a *priori* properties or spiritual entities, contradicting its premises and making concession to the doctrine of innate ideas. Psychological approach to the problem of cognition enabled Cabanis (1757-1808), a pupil of Condillac, to cure the basic defect of Sensationalism and make of it a logically consistent and empirically verifiable scientific naturalism, which came to be known as the eighteenth century Materialism.

Having realised the basic necessity of ascertaining what was sensibility, Cabanis began his enquiry with the questions: "Does it always presuppose consciousness and distinct perception? And must we refer to some other property of the living body all those unperceived impressions and movements in which volition has no part?" The enquiry led Cabanis to the conclusion that, in addition to direct and immediate sensations, "connate instincts" must be recognised as the source of mental phenomena. They are "images or ideas" which are formed in the brain not immediately and directly by the impressions to which they react. They are anterior, having been stored up in the brain and other nerve-centres as the totality of the product of earlier experiences.⁷ Thus, Cabanis abolished the invidious distinction between life and mind, showing that the latter is a function of the former.

"Subject to the action of external bodies, man finds in the impressions these bodies make on his organs, at once his knowledge and the cause of his continued existence; for, to live is to feel; and in that admirable chain of phenomena, which constitutes his existence, every one depends upon the development of some faculty, every faculty by its very development satisfies some one, and the faculties grow by exercise as the wants extend with the faculty of satisfying them. By the continual action of external bodies on the senses of man, results the most remarkable part of his existence."⁸ That is to say, intelligence and desire, reason and will are

manifestations of the self-same vital force.

In the tradition of the Renaissance, Descartes had insisted upon the independence of mind. Reason as a property of the mind thus remained isolated from life, on the other side of the unbridgeable gulf of psycho-physical parallelism. Metaphysical rationalism was a mere variation of teleology. Cartesian rationalism vigorously combatted all suggestions which denied a supra-material character to intelligence and reason, and identified the mental with the vital. "To doubt this truth (independence of mind) was to overthrow all morality, to reduce man to the level of the brute, to make religion a mockery. To doubt this truth was, in fact, to incur the most incriminating of charges—Materialism."⁹

By merging psychology into physiology, Cabanis successfully overthrew the authority of Descartes, and brought reason down to the earth as a function of higher biological organisms. Scientific naturalism of the eighteenth century, therefore, also pleaded guilty to the charge of Materialism. It also mocked at religion, and revealed religion as based on superstition. But it did not overthrow morality; on the contrary, it placed morality on a sounder foundation by giving man the conviction that he could find the sanction of morality in his own conscience—a part of his physical being. And de la Mettrie showed that man was a machine just like any other animal. Only, man was not reduced to the level of a brute, but his being and becoming were placed in the context of the physical nature, thus freeing him from the venerable prejudices of super-naturalism.

Julien Offray De La Mettrie (1709-51) was preceded by Robinet who, in his book on *Nature* attributed life to the smallest particles of matter: Even the constituents of inorganic nature bear within themselves, only without any self-consciousness, the principles of sensation. The two principles of matter—corporeal and spiritual—act upon each other.

Finally, de la Mettrie made the bold declaration that the entire world, including man, was a machine: the soul is material and matter soulful. The way the two—body and soul—grow and decay together, act upon each other, leaves no room for doubt about their essential similarity and inter-dependence. All organisms evolve out of one original germ; they grow by reacting upon the environment. Animals have intelligence, but plants have none; that is because, thanks to their ability to move about, animals can react

upon the environments in a greater variety of ways, with the result that they feel more wants and develop the ability to satisfy them. Man has the highest intelligence, because he feels more wants than other animals, and has the greatest mobility. Beings without wants have no mind.¹⁰

The expounder of these sensational ideas was not an ignorant man; nor did he make merely dogmatic assertions. De la Mettrie was a medical man of rich experience and vast learning. He evolved his ideas over a period of a quarter of a century. While under a violent attack of fever, he experienced that quickened circulation of the blood influenced thought. Having carried initial experiments on himself, he observed the phenomena in a large number of cases in hospitals. From those experiments and observations, he reached the conclusion that thought was nothing but a consequence of the organisation of the mechanism of the human body. The result of his initial enquiry was set forth in the earlier work, *Natural History of Soul*.

The beginning is cautious. It is shown that no philosopher, from Aristotle to Nicolas Malebranche (1638-1715), has been able to explain the nature of the soul; disembodied soul is like matter without form; it cannot be conceived. Therefore, the enquiry about the nature of the soul must begin with the study of the body. The study led to the conclusion that man is a machine. The conclusion was backed up by a great wealth of facts, collected from the observation of the sick and convalescent. Deprecating the attempts of great philosophers like Descartes, Leibniz and others, to form an *a priori* idea of man, de la Mettrie declared that "only a *posteriori*, starting from experience and from the study of the bodily organs, can we attain, if not a certainty, at least a high degree of probability."

So, there was no dogmatism even in the *enfant terrible* of eighteenth century Materialism. There is nothing outside nature. That was the basic proposition. The imperfection of the knowledge of nature was freely admitted; but the belief in its unlimitedness was unbounded. The potentiality of human intelligence was inexhaustible; the corollary to that belief was, the measure of man's creativeness was incalculable. The motto of the eighteenth century was: "Let human reason be free, and in a few generations it will build utopia" (Diderot). The Age of Reason thus gave birth to Romanticism: Reason was to be reinforced by "creative imagination".

The eighteenth century was the Age of Reason in the sense that demand for the application of reason to the affairs of this mortal world was the most outstanding feature of the intellectual life of the time. Rationalism came down from the rarefied atmosphere of metaphysical speculation, and claimed to be the criterion of political and social judgment.

Previously, the struggle for human freedom had been conducted largely in the realm of ideas. That was a necessary stage of the history of humanity. Anachronistic social relations and political institutions stood on the way of human progress; but they could not be removed unless their ideological foundation was undermined. They derived their moral sanction from a super-human, super-natural, divine authority, which was generally accepted. Man's mind had to be freed before he could feel the urge for freedom on this earth; spiritual freedom was the condition for man's being conscious of his capacity to reshape the world so as to promote the welfare and happiness of the race. The venerable belief in Providence had to be shaken before man could have faith in himself as the maker of his destiny. In brief, a philosophical revolution created the atmosphere for great political and social changes brought about by human will and human efforts. The success in the revolt against God emboldened man to rise against kings who claimed to rule with divine right.

Locke was the first political philosopher to demand secularisation of politics, not only in theory, but also in practice. He pointed out that the oppressiveness of the mediaeval social order was due to the confusion of religion and politics, making the one an instrument of the other, reciprocally. On the one hand, political power was used for the suppression of spiritual freedom; and, on the other, religion provided authority to despotic rulers and oppressive political institutions.

England was the scene of the first political revolution of modern times. But during the Cromwellian period, religious and political issues were confused. The Puritans did not demand secularisation of politics; they were religious fanatics themselves. The Puritan revolution, indeed, belonged to the age of religious wars, which had preceded the dawn of the Age of Reason. Locke seized upon and elaborated the ideas of toleration and civil liberty which grew out of the experience of the revolution in England. Those liberating ideas were enthusiastically hailed in France where a

philosophical revolution had created an explosive atmosphere admirably suitable for a dramatic unfoldment of their dynamics.

"A leading feature of the movement of thought so inaugurated in France was its active concern for the regeneration of society. The niceties of metaphysical speculation did not appeal to the clear practical mind of Voltaire or, indeed, to any of the French thinkers of the Voltairean age. The metaphysics of Locke and his French disciple Condillac was a sufficient instrument for their purpose, which was to apply the human reason coolly and dispassionately, without theological predilections and restraints, to the removal of the intellectual detritus of the Middle-Ages and to the amendment of man's state."¹¹

Historical research had revealed the origin of society as a creation of man, and civilisation as an evolutionary process. The new understanding of the past lighted up the future. The conditions of life could be changed, and a new world of freedom, happiness and harmony created by the efforts of man. Only a general will to bring about the desired changes must be kindled. For that purpose, the popular mind must be freed from prejudices and superstitions fostered by religion. A passionate appeal to reason was the method; but it presupposed the conviction that reason is not a metaphysical category, but a human attribute; that man is essentially a rational being. The conviction was created by the new philosophy of scientific naturalism as well as by the new understanding of past history. Abiding faith in the creativeness of man, and a fervent belief in the possibility of social progress were the key-notes of the intellectual life of the eighteenth century. "Energetic faith in the possibilities of social progress has been first reached through the philosophy of sensation and experience."¹²

Religion gave a meaning to man's life; there was a goal to attain, be it the blissful life in heaven or the mystic dream of salvation. The new philosophy destroyed the faith in a goal of life; it visualised life as a continuous process of becoming. Was the idea of progress consistent with a non-teleological view of life? Progress means advance in a certain direction, and the measure of the advance is the approximation to the journey's end. If life has no goal, if it is not a journey towards a definite end, how could one speak of progress? This argument may sound plausible, if not quite convincing, and with it, sceptics doubted the possibility of pro-

gress and even ridiculed the very idea. But there is another test for the idea of progress; it is the distance between the primitive and the civilised. The fact that mankind has been moving further and further away from the primitive state, and the movement has been evolutionary, warrants the belief in the possibility of future progress. And when it is further known that in the past it has not been a teleological process, but a result of human efforts, the optimistic view of the future finds an empirical justification, and the possibility or the logical expectation of progress increases in proportion to the will for it. The picture of a possible future is conceived in imagination. "Creative imagination" came to be the antidote of rationalist teleology.

The idea of progress was conceived by the intellectual leaders of the eighteenth century France in this sense. The fatalist mood of classical rationalism, the cult of a secular *teleos*, was entirely incompatible with this temperament and conviction. Convinced by the still inadequate scientific knowledge of their time, that man being a part of nature, human will was a manifestation of the sovereign laws of nature, they were full of the burning faith that, given the chance, man could be the maker of his destiny. The chance comes neither in the fulness of time as a matter of natural justice nor as a gift of God. It is to be conquered by man; but he is debarred from doing so by superstitions and prejudices born of the traditional religious mode of thought, as well as of the oppressive use of secular power. Therefore, the intellectual leaders of the eighteenth century felt the need for a crusade in the first place against religion; they believed that, freed from superstitions and prejudices fostered by religion, man would regain confidence in themselves and take up the task shaping the future according to enlightened self-interest. Guided by reason, illuminated by creative imagination, spiritually free men would alter the conditions of the world for the better. That is how the belief in social progress manifested itself in the eighteenth century. This view of life came to be known as Romanticism, which certainly did not rule out the use of reason in the guidance of human affairs.

Evidently, a new philosophy was required to usher in the Age of Man. It must be a philosophy concerned primarily with human life, which would set human spirit free—a philosophy which would explain all the phenomena of nature and all the experiences of human life without postulating a Providence or assuming

any transcendental divine intervention. Such a view of nature and human life could not claim absolute certainty without the absurd pretention of omniscience—of possessing perfect and absolute knowledge of all the aspects of existence. It must necessarily be rested on hypotheses such as were logically permissible and appeared plausible in the light of the scientific knowledge of the time.

Scepticism is not a stable position; it is a negative attitude which is bound to paralyse action. Scepticism is the mental attitude of a period of transition—from the rejection of antiquated ideas and false ideals to new convictions. Therefore, it cannot have a permanent place in a philosophy with a social purpose. It is not dogmatic to have a conviction as long as absolute certainty is not claimed. Dogmatism or finality has no place in a philosophy which disowns transcendental sanction, and seeks it only in a generalisation of the ever increasing body of positive knowledge acquired in the various fields of scientific investigation. The intellectual life of the eighteenth century, specially of France, was guided by such a philosophy with a social purpose.¹³

At the dawn of the Age of Reason, scepticism was the prevalent philosophy in France. The pious Christian Pierre Charron (1541-1603) shared with Montaigne the honour of ushering in that period of transition. While Blaise Pascal's (1541-1603) scepticism led him back to an "honest but narrow and fanatical" reverence for faith demonstrating the instability of a purely negative mood, La Mothe le Vayer, with the fundamentalist believer's distrust for theology, acted as an auxiliary to Bayle. Through his intermediary, scepticism penetrated the court of the Catholic Sun King, and his writings helped the cause of the Enlightenment generally. The tremendous influence of Bayle's scepticism is well known. Diderot himself began his struggle against the Church also under the standard of scepticism, and even de la Mettrie called himself a Pyrrhonist, walking in the footsteps of the "the first Frenchman who ventured to think", namely, Montaigne. Voltaire, of course, never abandoned the sceptic pose, because he stood with one foot in the camp of classicism, and temperamentally preferred the Dyonisian role to that of the Evangelist.

"With the death of Louis XIV came that remarkable turning point in modern history which was as important for the philosophic mode of thought of the educated, as for the social and political

fortunes of the nations: The intellectual intercourse between England and France which developed so suddenly and in such intensity.... In the sphere of politics, the French took from England the idea of civil freedom and of the rights of the individual; but these ideas were combined with the democratic tendency which awoke in France with irresistible strength. Similarly, in the sphere of speculation, English Materialism combined with French scepticism, and the product of this combination was the radical rejection of Christianity and the Church which in England since Newton and Boyle had made such excellent terms with the mechanical conception of nature. Singular and yet quite capable of explanation is the fact that the philosophy of Newton should in France be made to further atheism, while it had been introduced into France with the certificate that it was less injurious to faith than Cartesianism!"¹⁴.

Eighteenth century France was crowded with deists, sceptics, atheists and materialists. But there was one passion common to all of them; they were all anti-clericals, determined to free political life from the domination of religious orthodoxy and the influence of the Church. The light of knowledge should be taken to the people at large, if the power of superstition and tradition was to be broken. With that purpose, was the famous French Encyclopedia published in 28 volumes from 1751 to 1772. There was no open attack on the Church or faith; nor was atheism preached openly. "Tolerance, suspension of judgment, the application of reason to all the facts of human life were joined with the fullest explanation of natural phenomena and the natural sciences that had yet been made."¹⁵

The Encyclopedists pleaded for religious toleration and freedom of thought, and proclaimed the democratic doctrine that the lot of the common man was the main concern of the government. Propagation of knowledge was their fundamental purpose; knowledge will give people the power to break their bondage. The underlying purpose of the publication was hinted in d'Alembert's (1717-83) *Discourse Preliminaire*, wherein "Superstition and Magic" were listed under the heading "The Science of God".

The government, however, made no mistake about the danger of the covert assault upon its secular power and the divine sanction thereof. On the publication of its first two volumes, the Encyclopedia was suppressed as "injurious to the King's authority and religion". But the *philosophes*—Helvetius, de la Mettrie, d'Alembert

bert, Maupertuis, Lagrange, Condillac, Condorcet, Buffon, de Tracy, Cabanis, Turgot, Grimm, Holbach, Diderot, Voltaire—a galaxy of intellectual giants unparalleled since the golden age of Pericles, represented the spirit of the time. Their effort could not be easily suppressed; it found access everywhere, penetrated even the Court of Versailles. Thanks to the good offices of Madame Pompadour, and the savant Malesherbes, the then Director-General of the National Library, the government allowed resumption of "a work honourable to the nation". But the Church and other powerful forces of reaction gained the upperhand; the official ban was reimposed, and organised rowdiness made printing impossible. Finally, Diderot obtained private permission to proceed with the printing on condition that no volume would be published before the whole work was completed. The books, however, found wide circulation in the provinces of France as well as in countries abroad. In Paris, they were read secretly, and Madame Pompadour managed to have them presented at a royal dinner party.

"No Encyclopedia perhaps has been of such political importance, or has occupied so conspicuous a place in the civil and literary history of its century."¹⁶ "Theistic but heretical, it was opposed to the Church, then all-powerful in France; and it treated dogmas historically."¹⁷ The Encyclopedia has been described as "a war machine"; as it progressed, its attacks on the Church and still more on the despotic political regime as well as on Christianity itself, became bolder and more undisguised.

The great popularity and far-reaching influence of the Encyclopedia were the measure of the Enlightenment. The light of the new philosophy of human freedom, secular as well as spiritual, flashed over Europe like the lightning before the thunder—of the coming revolution. Napoleon appreciated the full value of the Enlightenment when he said: "The Bourbons might have preserved themselves if they had controlled writing materials. The advent of the cannon killed the feudal system; ink will kill the modern social organisation." The shrewd Corsican had the premonition that his new Empire might follow the *ancien régime* of the Bourbons. And he had reason to be anxious. Because, "books rule the world. Nothing enfranchises like education. When once a nation begins to think, it is impossible to stop it."¹⁸

Diderot spoke for the entire fraternity of the Philosophes, when in 1771 he wrote in a letter to a friend: "The first attack against

religion has been violent and unmeasured. Once men have in some manner assaulted the barriers of religion, they cannot be stopped. After they have turned their menacing looks against the sovereigns of the skies, they will next direct them against the sovereigns of the earth. The cable which depressed humanity is of two strands: the one cannot give way without the other soon snapping".

Yet, Diderot himself has travelled a long way before he reached that point. He had opposed Materialism, even as expressed cautiously in de la Mettrie's earlier book, *Natural History of the Soul*. At that time, he shared the pious romanticism of Anthony Ashley Cooper Shaftsbury (1671-1713) who described Christianity as "a cheeful and good-tempered religion", while declaring "there lies in every human breast natural germ of enthusiasm for virtue." Shaftsbury's exuberant optimism, hailed by the heralds of the revolution in France, marked a clear departure from the classical rationalism of his teacher. Locke, distrusted enthusiasm as the source of extravagance and self-exaltation, as a noxious product of the over-heated brain and as utterly opposed to all rational thought.¹⁹ Social purpose, however, drove Diderot to assume the leadership of the crusade against God and religion; and raising his voice against the intolerance, tyranny and brutality of the established order, he exclaimed: "What wrongs have these unhappy souls committed? Who has condemned them to these torments? The God whom they have offended. Who is then this God? A God of infinite goodness? What ! Can a God of infinite goodness find any pelasure in bathing himself in tears? These are people of whom we must not say that they fear God, but that they are frightened of Him. Considering the picture that is drawn for us of the Supreme Being, of His readiness to anger, of the fury of His vengeance, of the comparatively great number of those whom He allows to perish, as compared with a few to whom he is pleased to stretch forth a saving hand, the most righteous soul must be tempted to wish that He did not exist."²⁰

Enraged by the callous atmosphere in which cruel injustice was committed, the calculating Voltaire also finally abandoned the "polite persiflage of agnosticism", and joined the crusade against God and religion with the thundering motto, *Ecrasez l'Infame* (Crush the Infamy). The cool critic and hardened cynic gave way to a passionately partisan outburst of righteous indignation. "This is not a time for jesting which does not harmonise with massacres.

Is this the country of philosophy and pleasure? It is rather the country of the massacre of St. Bartholomew.... Come, brave Diderot, intrepid d'Alembert, ally yourselves, overwhelm the fanatics and the knaves, destroy the insipid declamations, the miserable sophistries, the lying history, the absurdities without number; do not let those who have sense be subjected to those who have none, and the generation which is being born will owe to us its reason and liberty."²¹

Rejecting the offer of a Cardinal's hat, an outraged old man threw all his caution and calculations to the winds and wrote the formidable *Treatise on Toleration*; it was quickly followed up by a vast mass of anti-clerical and anti-religious literature which flew in all directions like a veritable fusillade, from the "war machine" charging ahead at a top speed. Declaring that "big books are out of fashion", enraged Voltaire took to pamphleteering with the purpose of popularising the new philosophy, and he was fully successful as Napoleon testified subsequently. His "little soldiers" were sold by hundreds of thousands when literacy was very limited. The light reached practically every man and woman who could read.

For the greater part of his long life, Voltaire was rather an eclectic, an intellectual acrobat, than a passionate prophet, a man with a message. Yet, with Rousseau, he has been held responsible for the revolution.²² The two certainly personified respectively the two trends of thought which together led France to the revolution—Rationalism and Romanticism. Yet, Voltaire was not a classicist, which he often pretended to be. His was the complex personality of a highly civilised man in contrast to the primitiveness of Rousseau. Erotic and neurotic, the latter was also a complicated type. Emotionally and intellectually Rousseau was naive—the archetype of a romantic revolutionary, for whom thoughtless, fanatical, irrational passions were the only human virtue. Voltaire, on the contrary, with all his cynicism and frigidity, was a staunch believer in man's role in history.

"His Sacred Majesty, Chance, decides everything. True prayer lies not in asking for a violation of natural law, but in the acceptance of natural law as the unchangeable will of God."²³

"The Chancellor Bacon had shown the road which science might follow. But then Descartes appeared and did just the contrary of what he should have done: Instead of studying nature, he wished

to divine her. This best of mathematicians made only romances in philosophy. It is given to us to calculate, to weigh, to measure, to observe; this is natural philosophy; almost all the rest is chimeras."²⁴

When Voltaire's remains were taken, from the original modest place of burial, to the Pantheon, by order of the Revolutionary National Assembly, thirteen years after his death, the cortege bore the inscription: "He gave the human mind a great impetus; he prepared us for freedom."

However, Denis Diderot, editor of the great Encyclopedia, was the dynamo of the Enlightenment—the most representative figure of the "Voltairean Age," and Holbach's *System of Nature* the fullest expression of its spirit. Published in 1770, the *System of Nature* or *The Laws of the Physical and Moral Worlds* in no time came to be known as the "Bible of Materialism." In it were set forth all the logical consequences of the scientific knowledge disseminated through the Encyclopedia. What was implicit in the indifferently constructed and hurriedly composed earlier work, was made explicit and co-ordinated in a systematic statement of scientific naturalism. Though the authorship of the book is attributed to Holbach, who was certainly not a dummy, Diderot was its heart and soul. It maintained that the Universe was nothing but matter in spontaneous movement; that soul dies with the body; that happiness is the end of mankind; that it would be useless and unjust to insist upon a man's being virtuous if he could not be so without being unhappy; that the restraints of religion were to be replaced by education to develop enlightened self-interest; that the object of the study of science was to bring human desires into line with their natural surroundings. A whole philosophy was expounded in detail to justify a direct attack upon the established political regime and its social basis. It was a philosophy which heralded the revolution.

The object of the book is stated clearly in the Preface. "Man is unhappy merely because he misunderstands nature. His mind is so infected by prejudices that one must almost believe him to be for ever doomed to error; the chains of illusion in which he is so entangled from childhood have so grown upon him that he can only with the utmost trouble be again set free from them. Unhappily, he struggles to rise above the visible world, and painful experiences constantly remind him of the futility of his attempts.

Man disdained the study of nature to pursue after phantoms, that, like will-o-the-wisps, dazzled him and drew him from the plain path of truth, away from which he cannot attain happiness. It is therefore time to speak in nature remedies against the evils into which fanaticism has plunged us."

To secure the happiness of mankind being the purpose of philosophy, "the right of people to revolt in desperate circumstances" was declared as an axiomatic truth. Therefore, revolution must be regarded as a natural and necessary event. "As government only derives its powers from society, and is established only for its good, it is evident that society may revoke this power when its interests demand, may change the form of government, extend or limit the power entrusted to its leaders, over whom it retains supreme authority, by the immutable law of nature that subordinates the part to the whole."

The criticism of the traditional notion of public morality was very drastic; nevertheless, it was so true that it is equally valid even in our time. "We only see so many crimes on earth because everything conspires to make men criminal and vicious. Their religions, their governments, their education, the examples before their eyes, all drive them irresistibly to evil; in vain then does morality preach virtue which would only be a painful sacrifice of happiness in societies where vice and crime are perpetually crowned, honoured and rewarded, and where the most frightful disorders are only punished in those who are too weak to have the right to commit them with immunity. Society chastises in the small, the excesses that it respects in the great, and often is unjust enough to condemn to death those whom the prejudices that it maintains have rendered criminal."

Towards the end, the book rises to great heights of rhetoric without leaving the solid foundation of reason. Whoever might have written the rest, in its conclusion the inspired and inspiring voice of Diderot is unmistakable. The fruits of philosophical enquiry will sooner or later benefit all, just as it is already the case with the results of the natural sciences. The new ideas will encounter violent opposition; but men will gradually learn from experience. We must not limit our views to the present; the new philosophy is valid also for the future of all mankind. The last chapter is reminiscent of the immortal poem of Lucretius. There, Nature is discouraging. She invites mankind to obey her laws, to enjoy the

happiness which is their birthright, to cultivate virtue and disdain vice, but not to hate the vicious who are to be pitied for their misfortune. Then, the author speaks again as it were for himself: Nature has her apostles who are tirelessly engaged in promoting the happiness of man; those of them who may not succeed will have the satisfaction of having ventured to make the attempt. Finally, Nature and her daughters, Virtue, Reason and Truth, are invoked as the only deities to be adored and worshipped.

Diderot was the personification of the spirit of the Age of Enlightenment, because in him were harmonised the apparently conflicting outlooks of the two men who between themselves are said to have discredited the old order and invoked the forces of the new, namely, the rationalist Voltaire and the romanticist Rousseau. The evolution of the spirit of the age can be traced in the biography of Diderot.

"The man of fire and genius, who is so often called the head and leader of the Materialists, not only needed a long course of development before he reached what can be properly called a materialistic standpoint, but even to the last moment remained in a state of ferment which never allowed him to perfect and elucidate his views. The noble nature which comprised in itself all the virtues and all the faults of the Idealist, specially, zeal for human welfare, self-sacrificing friendship, and unfaltering faith in the good, the beautiful, the true, and in the perfectability of the world, was driven by the tendency of the times and against his will towards Materialism."²⁵

It is not true that Diderot embraced Materialism against his will. Materialism, a philosophy of life based on scientific knowledge, was the spirit of the time, which produced Diderot as its most representative spokesman. A scientific naturalist, philosophically, and a rationalist to the core, conceiving reason as a human faculty, Diderot nevertheless was an archetype of Shaftsbury's "Moralists"—an enthusiastic believer in "the ever-lasting beauty which runs through the whole world and combines all apparent dissonances into a deep, full-toned, harmony."

In other words, in Diderot, Reason and Romanticism combined to produce a perfected human philosophy, and inspire a revolutionary intellectual and social movement which swept the whole of Europe. Therefore, his most competent and impartial biographer has aptly compared Diderot with Socrates. Like the ancient

Sage of Athens, the great intellectual leader of the eighteenth century was the most representative figure of a period of transition, and as such reflected all the significant currents and cross-currents of thought and emotion; and they found a harmony in Diderot's personality. "In him, the process of the times from the Regency to the Revolution (the whole Age of Reason) fulfilled itself in all the phases of its development. There was in Diderot, as in Socrates, something demonic. He was then only completely himself when, like Socrates, he had raised himself up to the ideas of the True, the Good and the Beautiful. Only in this ecstasy did he become the real Diderot whose enraptured eloquence, like that of Socrates, carried every listener away."²⁶

In the seventeenth century, when modern philosophy was born, intellectual creativity was highly individualised. Complete systems were built by individual philosophers. The enlightenment of the eighteenth century was the creation of a fraternity of philosophers. The eighteenth century was swept by the springtide of an unprecedented exuberance of the human spirit. Intellect, talent, genius, sensibility, imagination ran riot. But there was an underlying unity of purpose; to humanise and democratise philosophy, so that it could be the instrument to promote the cause of freedom, progress and happiness.

"It lay in the nature of that seething time that all the various revolutionary tendencies reacted upon each other. If Diderot enthusiastically eulogised morality, he thought of attacking the very basis of morality might be awakened in another mind, whilst in both the minds there prevailed the same hatred of priestly morality and of the humiliation of mankind by the despotism of the clergy. Voltaire might arouse atheists with an apology for the existence of God, because he was above all things concerned to deprive the Church of the monopoly of the theistic doctrine which it had so misused and distorted. In this unceasing torrent of assault upon all authority, the tone became undoubtedly more and more radical."²⁷

Materialism, as it crystallised out of this background of intellectual ferment, emotional exuberance, moral indignation, political disaffection, economic chaos and social discontent, was not a dogmatic system rationally constructed by one single philosopher. It was neither a purely rationalist system of thought denying human will and human endeavour any significance in its

secular teleology; nor was it a dogmatic doctrine proclaiming the fictitious sovereignty and impotent free will of the atomised individual. Created by man, on the basis of collective human experience, Materialism, as it was elaborated by Diderot and his fellow-philosophers, was a human philosophy which took all the aspects of human existence into consideration, and attached equal importance to every manifestation of human spirit and every form of man's creativeness. The Renaissance found its culmination in the Enlightenment.

"Most of the philosophers of the French Revolution combined science with beliefs associated with Rousseau. Helvetius and Condorcet may be regarded as typical in their combination of rationalism and enthusiasm."²⁸ De la Mettrie formulated the metaphysics of Materialism; Helvetius provided the ethics, and his ethical system, deduced from the materialist metaphysics of de la Mettrie, was at the same time deeply coloured by Romanticism. An enthusiastic believer in man's essential rationality as well as goodness, Helvetius held that only a perfect education was needed to make man perfect. "Men are born ignorant, not stupid; they are made stupid by education." Helvetius profoundly influenced the moral philosophy of the nineteenth century. "What Bacon was to the physical world, Helvetius was to the moral. The moral world has, therefore, had its Bacon, but its Newton is still to come."²⁹ The pious founder of utilitarian ethics perhaps believed himself to be the Newton of the moral world. His equally pious colleague, James Mill, recommended the Materialist Helvetius to be the guide of his son's education, and the latter became the prophet of philosophical Radicalism.

Condorcet was the youngest member of the fraternity of philosophers. He was in the prime of life when the revolution broke out; and he participated in it, only to be one of its innumerable innocent victims. Though a mathematician, the emotional strand of the philosophy of revolution predominated in him. But at the critical moment, rationalism prevailed, and refusal to be swept away by the irrational revolutionary enthusiasm cost him his life. His faith in the liberating mission of the revolution, however, never flagged not even when he was martyred by the frenzy of the callous futility of its fanatical exuberance. On the contrary, he wrote his main philosophical treatise while haunted by the ferocious spectre of the guillotine, in an atmosphere of confusion and violence,

created by the fanatical devotees of the blood-thirsty cult of revolution. In the critical days of 1791, Condorcet was the first to demand publicly that the Monarchy should be replaced by a Republic. Thus, he broke away from the tradition of classicist rationalism of the Girondists. Yet, he did not join the Jacobins. Elected to the Convention from five constituencies, Condorcet was among those who found the King guilty of conspiring against liberty, but he would not vote for his death. The independence of advocating that the severity of justice might be softened with compassion brought him under the suspicion of Jacobin intolerance; he was accused of conspiracy against the Republic and declared an outlaw. With the help of friends, he managed to escape the guillotine and lived in hiding for the rest of his life—a little more than a year. During that time, he wrote *L'Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique des Progress de l'Esprit Humain* (The Outlines of a Picture of the History of the Progress of Human Spirit). It was an eloquent exposition of the evolutionary view of history and of the philosophy of revolution deduced from it.

All the evils of life had resulted from a conspiracy of priests and princes, who created unjust laws and oppressive institutions to rob the freedom of their fellow-men. But mankind was bound to vanquish its enemies and liberate itself from all bondage. Continuous progress in the past proves human perfectibility, which promises endless progress in the future. Starting from the lowest stage of barbarism, with no superiority over other animals except that of the structure of his body, man advances uninterruptedly in the path of enlightenment, virtue and happiness.

That is a brief statement of the premises on which Condorcet built his theory of history in ten stages. The ninth began with the great intellectual revolution of the eighteenth century and culminated in the gigantic political and social upheaval of 1789. The tenth epoch was still to come. Its nature could be inferred from the general laws which regulated the past. The three main tendencies manifested in the entire history of the past will also be the characteristic features of the future. They are: (1) Destruction of inequality between nations; (2) Disappearance of inequality between classes; and (3) Improvement of individuals resulting from the unfathomable perfectibility of human nature, intellectually, morally and physically.

That is the utopia of rationalism; but the future depicted by Con-

Condorcet's optimism is really not a dreamland. There will be no absolute equality; it will be an equality of rights and liberties. Equally free, men and nations will be equal; they are tending towards equality, because all are moving towards freedom. Condorcet's historicism was not a secular teleology; nor was his rationalism metaphysical. He knew that human progress was conditioned by the given circumstances of existence, political as well as social. But he held that progress could not be checked for ever, although it might be delayed or retarded. There is no limit to the advancement of knowledge and virtue; inexhaustibility of progress and human perfectibility result from the power of unbounded knowledge and moral excellence. Therefore, Condorcet, like Helvetius, attached great importance to popular education, which would create conditions for sure progress. That was the cardinal principle of the great intellectual revolution, which was therefore called the Enlightenment.

The torch of truth held high by the philosophers of the eighteenth century, however, was not extinguished. It blazed a luminous trail into the darkness of an unknown future, which is still to be travelled by mankind. The Enlightenment remains a human heritage, itself the noblest creation of man's genius. Voltaire eulogised Reason because Truth was her daughter. He distrusted enthusiasm and was sceptical of utopias. Yet, he was not quite immune from the contagion of the general spirit of the time. When Turgot came to power, he exclaimed: "We are in the Golden Age up to our neck." Perhaps that was veiled sarcasm of the cynic. But presently he was more explicit. "Everything appears to be sowing the seed of revolution, which must some day inevitably come. Light extends from neighbour to neighbour so that there will be a splendid outburst, and then there will be a rare commotion"

That also might have been an outburst of subtle scepticism; but it was prophetic nonetheless. Truth after all is the daughter of Reason and Voltaire was a rationalist.

NOTES

1. Paul Souquet, *La Revolution Francaise*.
2. *Traite des Animaux*.
3. Ibid.

4. David Hartley, *Observations on Man, His Frame, His Duty and His Expectations*.
5. *Laws of Organic Life*.
6. Ibid.
7. Cabanis, *Rapport du Physique et du Morale de l'Homme*.
8. Ibid.
9. Lewes, *History of Philosophy*.
10. *L'Homme Machine*.
11. H.A.L. Fisher, *The History of Europe*.
12. John Morley, *Life of Diderot*.
13. "It (18th century French philosophy) was a much more radical, aggressive and revolutionary philosophy than the species of English philosophy to which it was most allied, and of which it was, in a sense, the development. It was in particular more decided and sweeping in its rejection of authority, recognising none save that of reason, and accepting nothing from the criticism of reason. Ancient tradition, common consent, faith of the Church, scriptures, were held to be worthless except in so far as they conformed to, and vouched for by, reason. Specially Christian doctrines were treated by all the adherents of the new philosophy as absurd and pernicious superstitions; and although the principles of theism were accepted by a class of them as rationally warranted, a class not less numerous assailed all religious beliefs as delusion. The new philosophy was eminently rationalistic; it was not, however, calmly and temperately, but keenly and passionately, so. The philosophy was empirical as well as rationalistic, and largely also materialistic. Its eyes were not turned inwards or upwards, but they were keenly observant of the surrounding physical and social phenomena. In France, during the eighteenth century, a remarkable progress was made in mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, natural history, geography and medicine; and the causes of their progress were to a considerable extent the same to which were due the prevalence of the philosophy of the epoch. There were many who found in Holbach's conclusions only their own opinions, and firmly believed that science showed that there could be no God, soul or immortality. It was militant, aggressive, ethically, politically and religiously. It aimed not only at displacing, but replacing, the powers which had hitherto ruled the world. Its chief strength was drawn from its positive ethical and political convictions; from its faith in justice, toleration, liberty, fraternity, the sovereignty of the people, the Rights of Man." (Flint, *History of the Philosophy of History*).
14. Lange, *History of Materialism*.
15. Lynn Thorndike, *The Encyclopedia and History of Science*.

16. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 13th ed.
17. Rosenkranz, *Life and Works of Diderot*.
18. Tallentyre, *Voltaire*.
19. *Treatise on Human Undersanding*, Chapter, "On Enthusiasm", Life and Works of Diderot.
21. *Voltaire's Correspondence*.
22. "Those two men have destroyed France." (Louis XVI).
23. *Voltaire's Correspondence*
24. Pellissier, *Voltaire, Philosophe*.
25. Lange, *History of Materialism*.
27. Lange, *History of Materialism*.
28. Brussell, *History of Western Philosophy*.

Chapter X

THE GREAT REVOLUTION—I

The closing decade of the eighteenth century was marked by events which dealt such a smashing blow to the social order and political institutions of Europe that those time-honoured but dilapidated structures crumbled during the following age of revolution. The events took place in France, but they had a repercussion throughout Europe. France was the focal point of a European, indeed a worldwide, movements. It was the eruption of a volcano of human will and human energy which had been seething for centuries. Worn-out monuments of mediaeval barbarism were buried under the fiery excrescence of the eruption, which rocked the entire continent. An unrestrained outburst of passion and a riotous display of violent emotions seemed to throw rationality also into the scrap-heap of discarded ideas and discredited ideals. The Age of Reason appeared to end in an orgy of intolerance and irrationalism; at the same time, revolutionary enthusiasm for the classical tradition of the pre-Christian pagan antiquity made a caricature of Reason.

Alas! All that is only too true. Nevertheless, a radical readjustment of social relations and complete overhaul of political institutions were the crying needs of the time. Not even the severest critic of the revolution denies that the old regime was altogether indefensible. They only maintain that its supersession by a new order might have taken place gradually and peacefully. It is idle to speculate about the alternative possibilities of past history. The purpose of historical research is to understand why events moved as they did.

The fundamental issue of the Great European Revolution was the sanction for political authority; the doctrine of popular sovereignty was opposed to the dogma of the divine right of kings. The Great Revolution was a sequel to the Renaissance—the revolt

of man against God. As the final act of a great drama unfolding over several centuries, it was bound to be a stirring and spectacular demonstration of the pathos of human will, human energy, and human passion. In such climactic moments of the drama of history, actors are liable to lose their balance. That is why revolutions tend to be violent; and that was the case with the French Revolution. Deplorable as some of its features certainly were, no dispassionate historian can justify the conditions which made it almost inevitable. "The revolution was inevitable and indispensable. It was the explosion and revenge of the noblest feeling of humanity—I mean, energy." That is the verdict of a distinguished historian who is beyond the suspicion of partiality or dogmatism.

The religious wars of the sixteenth century and the Thirty Years' War (1618-48) having disintegrated the Holy Roman Empire and also weakened the power of Spain, by the middle of the seventeenth century, France held the proud position of the paramount State of Europe. She attained that position very largely thanks to the astuteness of Cardinal Richelieu (1585-1642) who took full advantage of the Thirty Years War to increase the military power of France. The Catholic conscience of the Cardinal did not prevent him from helping the Protestant Princes of Germany against Rome. Finally, France reached the zenith of her glory and grandeur during the long reign of Louis XIV (1638-1715), who therefore was hailed as the "Grand Monarch", the "Sun King". Not only was France the paramount political and military power; she also became the leader of European civilisation and culture. The age of Louis XIV was the age of Pascal, Corneille, Racine, Molière, Bossuet, Fenelon, La Fontaine, to mention only a few at random. "The age of Louis XIV occupies in the history of France a place analogous to that of the age of Pericles in the history of Greece, and Augustus in the history of Rome."² It was the apotheosis of absolute monarchy. The magnificent structure of power, glory and apparent prosperity was reared upon an inequitable and oppressive social system. The nobility and the Church, which between themselves owned practically all the land, were exempt from taxation. The entire burden fell on the peasantry. The result of that inequitable system of taxation was that public finance, even under conditions of apparent prosperity was threatened with bankruptcy. Great financial experts and administrators like Colbert, Necker and Turgot were called upon to tackle the problem. They planned

reforms, which, however, could not be carried through within the framework of the established social relations. "If the policy initiated by Richelieu may be credited with leading to the triumphs of the age of Louis XIV, it must equally be held to have contributed to bring about the disasters of the revolution."³

The policy initiated by Richelieu and perfected by Louis XIV was to curtail the powers of the feudal nobility without encroaching upon their privileges, and to extend royal patronage to the rising class of merchants and bankers. The civil administration was gradually manned by talented members of the new class.⁴ In return for the patronage, the great banking houses lent money to the Court, so that the perennial threat of financial bankruptcy could be headed off. On the other hand, the feudal privileges of the nobility were left intact on condition that they would reside in the capital to add to the grandeur of the Court. The motive of the policy was to free the provincial administrative and fiscal machinery from the interference of local powers, so that it could be placed under the control of bourgeois officials appointed directly by the Court. The progressive significance of that Machiavellian policy, however, was counter-balanced by the fact that it made the parasitic nature of the wealthy upper classes more evident than ever. The latter, in their turn, were thoroughly demoralised by the idleness and frivolity of Court life. The result of the system was general corruption and demoralisation of the ruling class.

Nothing short of a revolution could put an end to that state of affairs. But the victims of tyranny, despotism, anarchy and economic exploitation did not feel that need. If it is true that those factors were the sole and direct cause of the revolution, that they drove the people to revolt against intolerable conditions of life, then the revolution should have taken place a century earlier, on the death of the Grand Monarch, at any rate. "The misery of the great mass of the people foreboded a terrible reckoning. When the old king died in 1715, a general sense of relief was felt throughout France. But the monarchy itself was unshaken; its principles had not even been assailed. The temper of the French people was still the reverse of revolutionary or disloyal."⁵

Under the Orleans Regency (1715-23), conditions grew worse. Inefficiency and corruption made the government an object of ridicule. The Court sank to the lowest depth of demoralisation. On the whole, during the earlier part of the eighteenth century, the

ruling power was thoroughly decayed and disintegrated; it could resist a popular onslaught even less successfully than at the end of the century. Tradition was its only defence, and that proved still to be effective. But as soon as the popular mind was freed from the paralysing grip of tradition, the objective need for a revolution dawned in the consciousness of the generality; the monarchy ceased to be sacrosanct. It collapsed practically without any resistance; and the decayed structure of the old order crumbled into ruins like the walls of Jericho.

The revolution presupposed a challenge to the king's authority; his divine right to rule must be contested before the people would dare revolt against his despotism. That precondition was created by the Enlightenment. A philosophy which denied the very existence of the Divinity, logically destroyed the traditional moral sanction of the monarchy. If divine right was a fiction, what was the sanction of the king's authority? That was the beginning of the end; the Enlightenment was the effective cause of the revolution,⁶ and the origin of the philosophy of the Enlightenment could be traced to the intellectual Renaissance of the twelfth century, if one did not want to go back further into the long, long process of the spiritual growth of man. Eighteenth century Materialism was not the philosophy of the rising bourgeoisie, nor was the Enlightenment a bourgeois ideological movement.

"Every one of them (leaders of the revolution) bears the impress of the same philosophy—a purely destructive philosophy. The revolution, prepared and brought about by men of intellect and writers, was impregnated with the ideas that had ruled the 'Republic of Letters' for fifty years: ideological dogmatism, classicism, cosmopolitanism, humanitarianism, anti-Charistianism, and a philosophism destructive of all authority. They stirred up men's minds and sowed a ferment from within."⁷ Jacobins, Cordeliers, the Society of the Equals, no less than the Girondists, were all moved by ideas developed from the antiquity to the Enlightenment. Francois Noel Baboeuf's defence before his execution in 1797 has been described as a summing up of the unrealised ideals of the Enlightenment and a vindication of their necessity. On that occasion, he said: "You say that my ideas will send society back to barbarism. The great philosophers of the century did not think so; I am their disciple. Under the monarchy, I could get hold of the pernicious books of Mably, Helvetius, Diderot and Jean-Jacques."

The Church had always been the strongest bulwark of the monarchy. By holding the popular mind under the sway of the superstitions and prejudices of religion, it had kept alive the tradition of loyalty to the monarchy. There had been scepticism even at the time of the "most Christian King", as Louis XIV was called, but it was limited to high philosophical circles. Open attacks against the Church and religion began only under the Regency. That significant development was traced in detail by Rocquain in a book called *The Revolutionary Spirit Previous to the Revolution*. In 1751, "an anti-monarchical wind" was blowing over France. The influence of the ideas of Bayle, Voltaire, Montesquieu, de la Mettrie, Helvetius, was already making itself felt. "If the altar trembled, would the throne stand?"⁸.

The Christian belief about the relation between God and man, shaken already in the seventeenth century, was completely overwhelmed in the earlier decades of the eighteenth. The attack was delivered from two sides: in addition to the atheism of the new philosophy, based on science, Christian faith was opposed by the "natural religion" of the deists. Rousseau was the prophet of the new faith. It is true that the natural religion affected only a very small minority of "great lords, courtiers, princes and ministers, writers and men of learning, but they were the men who controlled governments and influenced public opinion."⁹

The monarchy was sustained by the twin pillars of the nobility and the clergy. Both of them felt the impact of the new spirit of scientific naturalism and natural religion. "The new teaching had imprinted itself on the minds of these men of noble birth more deeply than on any others. Some had lost all religious beliefs, and admitted the fact: others, unconsciously, had lost all faith in monarchy: almost all had lost their faith in their own rights. The revolution, to them, meant a rebellion against the despotism of kings and the fanaticism of priests."¹⁰ Referring to the reaction of the lower clergy, the same critical historian writes: "The inferior clergy viewed their disreputable superiors with anger, jealousy and shame. For years these parish priests, sons of the people, and profound believers, had been imbibing the democratic spirit, because they too had become imbued to some extent with the spirit of philosophy."¹¹

In a small town, twenty-four out of the forty subscribers to the *Encyclopaedia* were priests. That was a typical case. The spiritual

foundation of the old order were irreparably undermined by the new philosophy, assisted by the natural religion which emasculated faith by depriving it of fanaticism.

The French philosophy of the eighteenth century "was sweeping in its rejection of authority, recognising none save that of reason, and exempting nothing from the criticism of reason. Ancient tradition, common consent, faith of the Church, scripture, were held to be worthless except in so far as they conformed to, and vouched for, by, reason. Specially Christian doctrines were treated by all the adherents of the new philosophy as absurd and pernicious superstitions; and although the principles of theism were accepted by a class of them as rationally warranted, a class not less numerous assailed all religious beliefs as illusions. The new philosophy was eminently rationalistic. It was not, however, calmly and temperately, but keenly and passionately, so."¹²

In that philosophical atmosphere, Rousseau's was the only discordant voice. His quarrel with Diderot and others created the belief that the so-called Romantic movement was a revolt against the tyranny of reason. If Romanticism is confused with the morbid sentimentalism of Rousseau, then it can be regarded as antithetical to reason. In so far as Rousseau was a rebel against reason, that is to say, against the scientific philosophy of the eighteenth century. He was the prophet not of the Great Revolution but of the post-revolutionary reaction, which placed a good deal of literary talent at the service of neo-Catholicism. Rousseau undoubtedly was an evangelist of the revolution; the credit of having made the largest single contribution to its emotional aspect belongs to him. But he played the very important role neither as a preacher of the natural religion (deism) nor as a mystic moralist, nor again as the dreaming naturalist that he was. Popularisation of the doctrine of social contract was his contribution to the ideology of the revolution; and with him it was a *quasi* rationalist doctrine, deduced from the earlier social and political philosophies of Grotius, Puffendorf, Hobbes and Locke. There is some evidence to show that Rousseau learned also from Vico. His doctrine was only quasi rationalist because, in his characteristic manner, he disowned all indebtedness, and to prove his originality, he vehemently criticised theories which he appropriated, placing upon plagiarism the strong imprint of his moving rhetoric and a superb literary style.

In any case, no significant leader of the revolution was inspired

by Rousseau's sentimentalism and his animus against civilisation, science and progress. Robespierre was the only outstanding exception; and there was little of sentimentality in his cold calculating craftiness. Only as a sanctimonious moralist, he was a disciple of Rousseau. All the rest of the outstanding leaders of the revolution were avowed rationalists. They had read Anaxagoras and Cicero no less avidly than Rousseau's works. Danton, the greatest personality produced by the revolution, was frankly not an admirer of Rousseau.

On the one side, practically all the men who had brought about the revolution, and actually led it from one triumph to another until it became a mad carnage claiming those very men as its first victims—Mirabeau, Brissot, Verghiaud, Lanjuinais, Rabaud, Barbaroux, Condorcet, the Rollands, for to name only the most outstanding—were saturated with the rationalist scientific spirit of the eighteenth century. Their attitude towards Rousseau's philosophy was represented by Voltaire, who, having read the *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, wrote to the author: "I have received, Sir, your new book against the human species, and I thank you for it. No one has ever been so witty as you are in trying to turn us into brutes; to read your book makes one long to go on all fours. As, however, it is now some sixty years since I gave up the practice, I feel that it is unfortunately impossible for me to resume it."

On the other extreme, the Hebertists were fascinated neither by Rousseau's pious sentimentalism nor by his moral cant. They were attracted by his denunciation of private property. Those terrorists, the early harbingers of the cult of proletarian dictatorship, were instinctively captivated by the totalitarian implication of Rousseau's political theory. Robespierre and the small circle of his personal associates, were the only orthodox adherents of Rousseau's metaphysics and moral philosophy. That is a very important fact, revealing the sinister significance of the concept of the collective ego which is the essence of Rousseau's political philosophy. As the personification of that imaginary absolute authority, Robespierre wanted to establish a personal dictatorship; and the other orthodox disciples of Rousseau were the men of Thermidore who set up the *Directoire* and helped Napoleon to assume dictatorial power.

Certain facts of Rousseau's life may create the impression that

he stood outside the current of contemporary thought as the prophet of a philosophy, all of his own. He actually lived the earlier part of his life as an individual isolated from the intellectual atmosphere of the time. Subsequently, he came in contact with the fraternity of the *philosophes* who dominated the spiritual life of the eighteenth century. But the association lasted for a short period. Thereafter, he again played a lone hand; and yet, he came to be recognised as one of the inspirers of the revolution, if not its sole prophet. And his influence, like that of Voltaire, and the Encyclopedists, radiated beyond the frontiers of France. It inspired the belated Renaissance of Germany, and also the English romantic literary movement of the early nineteenth century. Whatever might have been the measure of Rousseau's European influence, it was not exactly revolutionary. The post-revolutionary romantic movement was definitely reactionary, in social and political matters, although that does not detract from the excellence of its literary creation. Rousseau's European reputation was that of a master of style. Chateaubriand imitated his style, and set the standard of the nineteenth century romantic literature.

Rousseau can hardly be called a philosopher. He was a sentimentalist, a dreamer, a utopian; and even as such he was not the product of an immaculate conception. To build an ideal society in imagination was the characteristic feature of the literature of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The dream was to be realised in a regenerated monarchy. "This feeling as well as the discontent with which it was associated found their earliest and clearest expression in the political romances or utopias which were written in France during the latter part of the seventeenth and the earlier part of the eighteenth century. Hope, springing immortal in the human breast, a suffering people is naturally prophetic. It is in their times of sorest depression that nations usually indulge most in dreams of a better future, and that their imaginations produce most freely social ideals and utopias. But all the ideals and utopias which appeared in France in this period had a common character. They were only so many forms of the prophesy of a perfect commonwealth centering in, and depending on, a perfectly wise and irresistibly powerful paternal ruler."¹³

Rousseau belonged to that tradition; only the good king had no place in his utopia. He was a revivalist nonetheless, asking mankind to turn back upon civilisation and return to the legendary

Golden Age of Arcadia. He had not outgrown the faith in monarchy; his idea of democracy was cast in the mould of the City Republics of ancient Greece.

Nor was Rousseau an original thinker, either as a moralist condemning private property as the root of all social evils, or as a preacher of natural religion. Morelly (fl. 1755) was the prophet of the cult of collectivism; through Fourier (1772-1837), he inspired the socialist movement of the nineteenth century. His book, *Code de la Nature*, was published ten years before the *Social Contract* (1762). The sentiments expressed therein were so very radical, much more so than Rousseau's, that its authorship was for a long time ascribed to Diderot. Morelly fully accepted the view that man is a sentient physical organism, his object being the attainment of pleasure. But the pursuit of happiness is not immoral, because human nature is good and innocent. "Morality implies no antagonism between the passions and duty, for the former are legitimate and sovereign, and would cause no harm if allowed free play. The great social problem is to find a situation in which the passions will be fully gratified, while it will be almost impossible for men to be tempted or depraved. It can only be solved through the elimination of avarice, the only vice in the world, the universal pest of mankind, the slow fever or consumptive disease of society." The utopia will be achieved when private property is abolished and wealth possessed collectively. Rousseau did not advocate a more revolutionary reconstruction of society.

Mably (1709-1785), also a catholic scholar, was another ideologist of the revolution. He was a deist, believing in a good God and moral law. He laid great emphasis on the place of morality in politics, and held that without religion morality was not possible. He also condemned private property as the cause of social inequalities. "If you follow the chain of your vices, you will find that the first link is fastened to the inequality of wealth." Mably anticipated the "scientific Socialism" of Marx by declaring that communal ownership of wealth and social equality prevailed at the dawn of history and they would be characteristic features of the ideal society of the future.

As a utopian moralist, as a preacher of natural religion, in opposition to Christian orthodoxy, as a prophet of collectivism, Rousseau thus did not stand alone; he had predecessors as well as contemporaries. Together with them, he gave a purely emotional

pression to the spirit of the age, without himself imbibing it intellectually. In fateful periods of history, when mankind is called upon to perform acts of great heroism, be it for good or for evil, sentimental appeals to emotion, if they are couched in a stirring language, find more immediate and spectacular response. That is why, when the revolution broke out, Rousseau's influence appeared to be greater than that of the Enlightenment, though it was the philosophical revolution which created the consciousness of the need for a radical political and social reconstruction; and it was that new consciousness which responded to Rousseau's rhetorics. "Both were sons of their age, but Voltaire inherited its more general characteristics, and Rousseau, such as were less common. Hence the latter is often erroneously regarded as having been a man of greater independence and originality of thought, and less imbued with the spirit of the time. In reality, there was little substantial novelty in his teaching, and even when he opposed certain tendencies of the age, it was in the spirit of the age. Had he been more original, he would have been less influential."¹⁴

That is an excellent description of Rousseau's place in history and appreciation of the role he actually played. The spirit of the age was the belief that man could make his own destiny. Rousseau's "noble savage" appealed to that faith as Prometheus Unbound. Therefore it was such a powerful appeal. For those who responded to the appeal, it was not a call of the wild; it was the tocsin for a heroic assault on the stagnant present, to blaze the trail into the darkness of the future already illuminated by science. The revolution stimulated heroism and afforded chances of attaining greatness. Its activities were romantic. Its style and thought, however, were thoroughly classical. Its doctrines were derived from the philosophy of the eighteenth century. Its imagination was cast in the moulds of the classical antiquity and abstract reason. It argued on the authority of Plutarch (c.46-c.120 A.D.) and it established the worship of Reason.

The recollection of the religious and civil wars which had devastated Germany, England and France up to the closing decades of the seventeenth century, created a distrust for the emotional attitude to life, which so very easily degenerated into strong passions and fanaticism. Completely exhausted by the Thirty Years War; Germany lay prostrate in a state of spiritual coma. In England, Locke frowned upon enthusiasm. Under Louis XIV, France

came out of the dismal age of religious wars and entered the Age of Reason. It was long since France had experienced an unbroken period of order, security and apparent prosperity. From the point of view of the classes which constituted the social basis of the monarchy, it was a golden age; and the wisdom of Colbert shared by the king tried to broaden the social basis of the monarchy. The attempted policy was to establish a direct relation between the king and the people so as to undermine the position of the feudal aristocracy. Instead of being the leader of his nobles, the king posed as the benevolent protector of his people. Paternalism reinforced the position of the monarchy, and loyalty to the *status quo* became a general sentiment. The peasants also were relieved by the end of incessant wars, and, notwithstanding many grievances, became attached to a regime which had established peace and order. There was a general distrust for any innovation. The spirit of conservatism promoted classical learning. The idea of a law-governed Universe as revealed in the Newtonian cosmology, fitted into that atmosphere of classical conservatism. The world was destined to move smoothly according to the laws of nature, if only the orderly process was not disturbed by passions which should therefore be placed under the censorship of reason. Rationalism was identified with the defence of the *status quo*. But it was not rationalism; it was classicism; the romantic movement was a revolt against that spirit of conservatism, which rationalised itself on the authority of classical learning. Therefore, historically, romanticism was the harbinger of the Great Revolution, and in that sense it was not antithetical to the rationalism of the scientific naturalist philosophy of the eighteenth century, which prepared the ground for the revolution. The two together constituted the revolt against the classicism of the age of Louis XIV—a revolt which culminated in the Great Revolution.¹⁵

The doctrine of *Social Contract* was Rousseau's (1712-78) main contribution to revolutionary thought; the doctrine itself is of rationalist tradition, having been postulated first by Grotius and Puffendorf; given a definite shape by Hobbes; and finally elaborated by Locke as the foundation of his political philosophy.¹⁶ Montesquieu tried to establish the *a priori* doctrine empirically. Politically, Rousseau was a disciple of Montesquieu; but having inherited from him the notion of social contract, Rousseau reverted to the earlier *a priori* conception. In the first draft of the *Social Con-*

tract, he wrote: "There are a thousand ways of bringing men together; there is only one way of truly uniting them. Therefore, in this work, I give only one method for the formation of political societies, though, there is perhaps no other among the variety of associations that at present exist which has arisen in the same way, and not a single one which was formed in the way I have indicated. But I am seeking the rights and basis of society, and am not quarreling about facts."¹⁷ His doctrine is historically false,¹⁸ although the idea of contract was very useful for the development of the theory of political constitutions. Not only in the eighteenth century, but even later, the idea of social contract was believed to be the foundation of the democratic political philosophy. But Rousseau himself revealed the dangerous implication of the idea, although for a long time it escaped the notice of political thinkers and constitutional theorists.

The revolutionaries of the eighteenth century enthusiastically hailed the doctrine of contract as the origin of civil society, because it provided a secular sanction for the new political regime, to replace the old order which drew its authority from the divine right of kings. It served a political purpose; that was the reason of Rousseau's popularity amongst the revolutionaries. "The *Social Contract* became the Bible of most of the leaders in the French Revolution, but no doubt, as is the fate of Bibles, it was not carefully read and was still less understood by many of its disciples. By its doctrine of the general will, it made possible the mystic identification of a leader with his people, which has no need of confirmation by so mundane an apparatus as the ballot box. Its first fruit in practice was the reign of Robespierre (1758-94); the dictatorships of Russia and Germany (specially the latter) are in part an outcome of Rousseau's teachings."¹⁹

The theory of social contract as elaborated by Rousseau proves that democracy is not possible. He conceived democracy only in the pattern of the city states of ancient Greece. In the world of the eighteenth century, when national States embraced large territories and vast populations, direct democracy was evidently not possible. So, Rousseau lamented: "Were there a people of gods, their government would be democratic. So perfect a government is not for men." Not only there were no gods in the civilised world, but the "noble savage", full of goodness and simplicity, was also a thing of the past. While scorching civilisation with the fire of righteous

indignation, and passionately preaching the virtue of noble savagery, Rousseau nevertheless was very logical in developing a political philosophy, including a theory of the State. Since direct democracy was not possible in the civilised world, and the morally perverse civilised man would not return to the purity and simplicity of the primitive society, delegation of the sovereignty of the people to an "elective aristocracy" is inevitable; that is the only basis of an orderly society and stable government. That is how social contract operates in the civilised world.

An apparently democratic doctrine thus provides justification for the delegation of power and its concentration, which practice made an empty and deceptive formality of the principle of democracy. The social contract consists in "the total alienation of each associate, together with all his rights, to the whole community; as each gives himself absolutely, the conditions are the same for all." Equality will be achieved at the cost of liberty! Since absence of liberty is bondage, the equality established under the social contract will be an equality of bondage!

In Rousseau's theory of State not only is democracy a still-born child, but totalitarianism is postulated as the only practical principle. "If individuals retained certain rights, as there would be no common superior to decide between them and the public, each, being on one point his own judge, would ask to be so on all; the (pre-contractual) state of nature would thus continue, and the association would necessarily become inoperative or tyrannical." To justify absolute alienation of the individual, his vicarious sacrifice at the altar of the new god of the collective ego, Rousseau quietly discards his utopian view of the state of nature in which man is simple and good, and adopt Hobbes' opinion that, when the primitive man lived in the state of nature, it was a war of all against all.

"Rousseau, like Hobbes, would organise society on the basis of a compact which makes the ruling will or sovereign authority indivisible, unlimited and unconditioned; only whereas Hobbes would place the absolute sovereignty in an individual will, Rousseau would assign it to the collective will. The ideal delineated in *Leviathan* is that of a monarchical despotism, and the ideal delineated in the *Social Contract* is that of a democratic despotism."²⁰ Robespierre tried to work out Rousseau's ideas; the consequence was degeneration of the Great Revolution into a reign of terror. Having seized dictatorial power, Robespierre disowned reason and

introduced the worship of the Supreme Being.

A very significant fact of history is that, while the monarchist reaction would have nothing to do with Hobbes' monarchist political theory, Rousseau's idea went into the making of the metaphysical conception of the State, and through Fichte, became a patrimony of the anti-democratic crusaders of the twentieth century. Hobbes' picture of man in the state of nature is much nearer to reality than Rousseau's noble savage full of goodness and simplicity. One is a scientific hypothesis, defective to the extent that it was based upon very inadequate empirical knowledge, whereas the other, a sentimental imagination coloured by a fully warranted disgust with the corruption, frivolity and rigid conventionalism of the age of Louis XIV, which lingered in the upper strata of the society of the eighteenth century.

Rousseau's approach to social problems was never scientific; his was a purely subjective reaction. The experience of the earlier part of his life embittered him, and out of a morbid psychological state grew his pessimistic view of history, denial of progress and condemnation of civilisation as a curse.²¹ Disgusted with the present, he could not be hopeful about the future, because of his censorious attitude towards the historical past. If there was no moral progress in the past, a better future could not follow from the immoral present.

Rousseau's picture of the future—of a romantic Leviathan—could not be inspiring for those rationally pursuing the ideal of human freedom. He condemned mankind to "democratic despotism", because he believed that, given the immorality and perversity of the civilised man, he could not escape that fate; nothing better was possible. The noble savage—living blissfully in the simple state of nature was the consolation prize Rousseau awarded himself. His doctrine of social contract was reared upon a legend created by his imagination: "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains." The first part of this rhetorical flourish with which Rousseau begins his treatise on political science, is simply not true;²² at best it is a dogmatic assertion; and the second part implies that man is not capable of freedom. The two cancel each other, and civilised mankind is confronted with the choice between a return to the imaginary blissful state of nature and the deceptive utopia of equality without liberty. The chains which bind man everywhere result from civilisation; man is responsible for his own

bondage, because civilisation is his own creation. The logical deduction from these rhetorics of Rousseau is that man can create only evil. What then happens to his original goodness? Rousseau's facile eloquence skips over such embarrassing questions.²³ But no critical student, while fully appreciating his merits, can grant him the credit of having founded the romantic movement which reinforced reason with creative imagination. Rousseau was simply irrational, and his morbid imagination was destructive, not creative. But nature takes her revenge; Rousseau's perspective of democratic despotism logically follows from his inability to regard history as an evolutionary process.

Though the notion of a contract as the foundation of civil society had been a hypothesis of political science before it was dogmatically elaborated by Rousseau, he introduced in it an original concept of sovereignty—that of the General Will. It was no longer the imaginary contradiction between rationalism and freedom; the conflict between Rousseau and the philosophers of the eighteenth century was the old conflict between faith and reason, science and superstition.²⁴ It was on this perennial issue of the entire human history that Rousseau disagreed with the Encyclopedists. "That moral justice which seems to the philosophers a presumption against Providence, is to me a proof of its existence."²⁵ Notwithstanding his extravagant romanticism, Rousseau could never get out of the Calvinist tradition. His thoroughly unhistorical judgment of civilisation was a Calvinist prejudice: Human life is sinful, notwithstanding its goodness in the state of nature. Again it was the influence of Calvinist dogmatism which made him believe in the emergence of an ordered system of human society: Man is sinful, and left to himself can do only evil; but God uses man and nations for the unfolding of his will to create an orderly society. With the metaphysical concept of the General Will, Rousseau reintroduced teleology into politics, even when he appeared to be discovering a secular sanction for it. The General Will is the instrument through which the divine will functions. Rousseau evidently was not a man of the Renaissance, which reached its climax in the scientific naturalism and secular culture of the eighteenth century. He belonged to the tradition of the Reformation. Objectively, he represented a reactionary tendency, which manifested itself clearly in the post-revolutionary romanticism of the nineteenth century.

The doctrine of the General Will is the foundation of the metaphysical and also the organic conception of the State. Commenting approvingly on Rousseau's distinction between the General Will and the will of all; Hegel wrote: "Rousseau would have made a sounder contribution towards a theory of State if he had always kept this distinction in sight."²⁶ With Rousseau himself, the conception of State tended to be anthropomorphic. Already in the essay on political economy, written for the *Encyclopedia*, he personified the State — "as an articulate body, living, and similar to that of man." In the *Social Contract*, the State becomes "a moral and collective person." Monarchy eliminated, Rousseau's political theory thus clearly indicated the way towards "People's Tribunes" becoming dictators. The ghost of Louis XIV haunted the "prophet of democracy"; his "democratic despots" could also claim to be the vehicles of the divine will and declare: *L'Etat c'est moi*. Rousseau personified his theory of history; he certainly wanted progress on the reverse gear.

Even if the teleological justification of Rousseau's theory is discounted as his personal prejudice, the General Will becomes the fiction of a collective ego which is placed over and above the totality of the wills and desires of those living a contractual life. Kant brought out the totalitarian implication of Rousseau's General Will. "The act through which a people constitutes itself a State, or to speak more properly, the idea of such an act, in terms of which alone its legitimacy can be conceived, is the original contract by which all the people surrender their outward freedom in order to resume it at once as members of a common entity, that is, the people regarded as the State. Such a contract is by no means to be necessarily assumed to be a fact—indeed, it is not even possible as such; it is a mere idea of reason, which has however its undoubted reality: that is, it obligates every law-giver to promulgate his laws in such a way that they could have arisen from the united will of an entire people, and to regard every subject, in so far as he desires to be a citizen, as though he had joined in assenting to such a will."²⁷

General Will is not identical with the will of all, a fact on which Hegel laid special emphasis. Every member of the community naturally strives for his individual interest; but by the contract all are pledged to further the common interest. In practice, individual interests in a society of equals cancel each other; and there remains

only the contractual obligation to further common interest. The sum total of individual wills discharging that obligation is the General Will. It is obviously a metaphysical concept which must find an appropriate physical medium of expression. The medium is the "elective aristocracy", or "democratic despotism". The former expression is used by Rousseau himself. Eventually, people's tribunes or leaders appear on the scene as incorporations of the General Will. Rousseau's democracy is realised in its complete destruction.

Though his political theory was dubious and dangerous, Rousseau's religious views were quite categorical, if not always very clear. In that respect also, he lacked consistency and stability. The natural religion of the deists may pass as poetry. But Rousseau's undying Calvinist conviction did not allow him to remain a tolerant deist who found the sanction for ethical and aesthetic values in a vaguely mystical faith. Rousseau actually expounded a science of God, which was subsequently acceptable to many modern Protestant theologians. He maintained that the faith in God must be placed above all rational argumentation; it results from one's mystic experience and as such is the only foundation of ethics. "I believe in God as strongly as I believe in any other truth, because believing and not believing are the last things in the world that depend on me." In other words, one cannot help believing in God: to believe is human nature. As the expounder of a mystic theology, Rousseau struck at the very roots of rationalism.²⁸ But as a political theorist, he could not altogether dispense with reason, and it was in the latter capacity that he was hailed as a prophet of a Great Revolution. But, for Rousseau himself, the two strands of his thought were integrated in one system in which a mystic faith, morbid imagination and unrestrained passion prevailed. "He entertained no principles, either to influence his heart or guide his understanding."²⁹ That is a very harsh judgment pronounced by one of the most brilliant exponents of romanticism. Burke (1729-97) also held that "to achieve its end politics should be adjusted not to human reason but to human nature, of which reason is but a part, and by no means the greatest part." Nor did Carlyle (1795-1881), yet another romanticist, take kindly to Rousseau's romanticism. Because it was not romanticism, but sheer sentimentality, Rousseau certainly rejected the scientific naturalism of the eighteenth century, and for that reason must be credited rather

as the prophet of reaction than of revolution. It was under his influence that the revolution degenerated into the short-lived, shockingly sanguinary, dictatorship of Robespierre.

Rousseau's famous paradoxes for a long time confused opinion about him. His doctrines were interpreted in the most contradictory senses; his place in history was appraised very differently by different scholars. Even after his sentimentalism and passionate devotion to the fashionable cult of "sensibility" had inspired post-revolutionary reaction, he was hailed as the pioneer of socialism. In him, "the poor have found a powerful pleader, the dumb millions a voice, democracy its refounder, and humanity in the eighteenth century its typical representative man, who gave vent to its inmost sentiment, troubles, aspirations and audacious spirit of revolt."³⁰ Having quoted this opinion, as "not accurate", Robert Flint directly proceeds to declare: "But it is just as correct also to say that in him the poor have found a persuasive seducer, the dumb millions a voice which by the follies it uttered discredited what was reasonable in their claims, democracy a reconstructor so wise as to choose for its corner-stone the very falsehood on which despotism rests, and humanity in the eighteenth century the great literary exponent of those passions and errors which were the seeds of the guillotine, the germs of the infamies of the reign of terror."³¹

NOTES

1. Louis Madelin, *The French Revolution*.
2. Robert Flint, *The History of the Philosophy of History*.
3. Ibid.
4. "It was not necessary for the bourgeoisie to revolt; they were in power since the reign of Louis XIV." (Madelin, *The French Revolution*).
5. Flint, *The History of the Philosophy of History*.
6. "The revolution was the outcome of realities; but it cannot be denied that without the help of Enlightenment it could not have arisen." (Madelin, *The French Revolution*).
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Seignobos, *The History of the Rise of Modern Civilisation*.
10. Madelin, *The French Revolution*.
11. Ibid.

12. Flint, *The History of the Philosophy of History*.
13. Flint, *The History of the Philosophy of History*.
14. Flint, *The History of the Philosophy of History*.
15. "Romanticism is not a revolt from reason, an emotional fling, an escape from the real. It is a voyage of discovery with the whole man as master. His reason, inseparably linked to his will, guides his desire and conserves the fruits of his action. Considered abstractly and separately, Reason and Will keep pace with each other, now one leading by urging a want, now the other by stretching the use of a means; both together building up what in our sanguine moments we call civilisation. In moments of dejection, we feel and see that by the test of both reason and desire, civilisation falls short of its aim, and we are reminded of the romantic truth that in his greatness man himself is weak." (Jacques Brazon, *Romanticism and the Modern Ego*).
16. "Though the character and the original genius of Rousseau were stamped upon every feature of his time, the doctrines of the Social Contract are in all essentials borrowed from Locke and from Sydney, and where they diverge from their models, they fall speedily into absurdity." (Lecky, *The Rise of Rationalism in Europe*).
17. C.E. Vaughan, *The Political Writings of Rousseau*.
18. The doctrine "is utterly unhistorical in character—a product of conjecture, abstraction and argumentation, all divorced from historical experience." (Flint, *History of the Philosophy of History*).
19. Bertrands Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*.
20. Flint, *History of the Philosophy of History*.
21. In his maturer years, Rousseau appeared to have thought differently. Describing the passage from an imaginary presocial condition to the civil state, he wrote: "It produces a very remarkable change in man by substituting justice for instinct in his conduct, and giving his actions the morality they had formerly lacked. Then only, when the voice of duty takes the place of physical impulses and the right of appetite, does man, who so far had considered only himself, find that he is forced to act on different principles, and to consult his reason before listening to his inclinations. Although in this state he deprives himself of some advantages which he got from nature, he gains in return others so great that, did not the abuses of this new condition often degrade him below which he left, he would be bound to bless continually the happy moment which took him from it for ever, instead of a stupid and unimaginitive animal, made him an intelligent being and a man." (*Social Contract*). But again Rousseau contradicted himself by setting up the doctrine of the general will as the basic principle of his political philosophy.
22. "Man is not born free, but he becomes free in the measure in which he becomes man, as he becomes man in the measure in which he

becomes free. And only as he becomes himself, can he learn to know himself." (Flint, *History of the Philosophy of History*).

23. Rousseau "was one of those writers who are eminently destitute of the judgment that enables men without exaggeration to discriminate between truth and falsehood, and yet eminently endowed with that logical faculty which enables them to defend the opinions they have embraced. No one plunged more recklessly into paradox, or supported those paradoxes with more consummate skill." (Lecky, *The Rise of Rationalism in Europe*).
24. "Rousseau was the first to discover, beneath the varying forms that human nature assumes, the deeply concealed essence of man and the hidden law in accordance with which Providence is justified by his observations. After Newton and Rousseau, the ways of God are justified—and Pope's thesis is henceforth true." (Kant, *Fragments*).
 "The eighteenth century held to its faith in reason and science and saw in them 'des Menschen allerhoechste Kraft', man's supreme power. It was convinced that it would take only the complete development of man's understanding, only the cultivation of all his intellectual powers, to transform man spiritually and to produce a new and happier humanity. But Rousseau had broken with this faith; to it he had opposed that passionate indictment against the arts and sciences contained in his first Discourse." (Ernst Cassirer, *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe*).
25. Rousseau, *Emile*.
26. Hegel, *Logic*.
27. Kant, *Metaphysical Basis of the Theory of Law*.
28. "The rejection of reason in favour of the heart was not an advance. In fact, no one thought of this device so long as reason appeared to be on the side of religious belief. In Rousseau's environment, reason as represented by Voltaire, was opposed to religion. Therefore, away with reason!" (Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*).
29. Burke.
30. Graham, *Socialism. New and Old*.
31. Flint, *History of the Philosophy of History*.

Chapter XI

THE GREAT REVOLUTION—II

The first triumph of the revolution was scored when the clerical order decided to sit in the Assembly together with the Third Estate. Expansion of franchise introduced by Louis XVI on Jacques Necker's advice had increased the representation of the Third Estate (democracy) so as to command a majority in the Assembly. Previously, the aristocratic and clerical orders together constituted a permanent majority. The upsetting of that unequal relation of forces by a royal decree was itself a revolution. The two higher orders tried to block it by refusing to sit and vote together with the democratic majority. Thereupon, under the leadership of Mirabeau, the latter declared itself to be the sovereign legislative power, and to be in permanent session. A first-class revolutionary crisis was precipitated. The deadlock was broken when representatives of the lower clergy, which had come under the influence of the Enlightenment, broke away from their order to join the democratic camp. Three of their spokesmen appeared in the Assembly of the Third Estate with the declaration: "Preceded by the touch of Reason, and led by our love for the public will, and by the cry of our conscience, we come to join our fellow-citizens and our brothers." The first breach was immediately followed by a landslide. On the same day, by an overwhelming majority, the Chamber of the Clergy voted for union with the Third Estate, that is, to join the revolution. .

As far as the monarchy was concerned, the revolution was complete. With the defection of the agents of God on earth, it could no longer claim to rule by Divine right. The old regime forfeited its moral sanction. Reason at last triumphed over time-honoured faith. The devout army of God, the traditional defenders of faith, accepted the lead of Reason. Revolution followed.

When Louis XVI consented to grant what practically amounted

to universal franchise, he most probably relied upon the traditional monarchist sentiment of the people. According to the famous historian of the revolution, Francois Victor Adphonse Aulard, it was a piece of Machiavellism; the purpose being to pack the Assembly with intellectually backward provincial deputies, who would follow the clergy; the men of the Enlightenment would be thus placed in a minority. That might well have been the case. But the defection of the clergy under the influence of the Enlightenment altered the relation of forces, and upset the Machiavellian scheme.

The news of the defection of the clerical order caused consternation in the Court. Drastic measures must be taken to stem the tide. All the three orders were summoned to a Royal Audience, where they were to sit apart as before. Meanwhile, the rebellious orders were not allowed to enter the Assembly Hall. What were they to do? To obey or to march forward on the road of revolution? The decision rested with the majority of the provincial deputies. The test came when Mirabeau, yet an obscure man, cried: "To the Tennis Court!"—the Assembly should hold its session there, defying the Royal Order. There was a general assent by acclamation; the crowd of deputies followed the philosopher Jean Sylvain Bailly and the learned cleric Abbe Seiyes, and took the oath "never to separate until the Constitution had been established and set on a firm foundation." For all practical purposes, the monarchy was no more; it was overthrown by the unanimous vote of those on whose traditional loyalty it had counted. That was the consequence of the defection of the clergy. Having forfeited the claim to rule by Divine right, the king lost the loyalty even of those who were his most Christian subjects until the day before.

Two days later, forty-seven nobles led by the Duke de Orleans came to join the deputies of the Third Estate, who had refused to leave the hall when the king had ordered the Assembly to disperse. The revolt was affecting the army. The king had no alternative. He issued the order that all the three estates should sit together in the National Assembly. The nobility as an order obeyed.

Meanwhile, events moved fast in Paris, culminating in the fall of the Bastille. That symbolic act, which cast its ominous shadow ahead, was committed in an atmosphere of the fever heat of emotional effervescence whipped up by the evangelists of the pseudo-romanticism of Jean-Jacques. A terrifying glimpse into its future

hastened the completion of the revolution at Versailles. Representatives of the nobility in the Assembly demanded abolition of feudal privileges. The aristocracy as a class did not join the revolution; it capitulated.

During the first two years, the revolution was led by the so-called Girondins. A certain class of historians have depicted them as reformists and even reactionaries. Yet, the truth is that the fanatical followers of Rousseau killed a king after he had been deprived of all power, practically dethroned by the followers of the *philosophes* who would have preferred the revolution to develop in an orderly manner, because they were rationalists, but therefore no less revolutionaries. They were the original Jacobins, having been founders of the redoubtable Club. They were uncompromising republicans; they were not mystic sentimentalists or sanctimonious moralists, but pagans. Condorcet was one of them, many being his followers. "In certain respects, they went further than Robespierre: like him, they were fanatical disciples of Rousseau, but they did not bow their heads like Jean-Jacques and his prophet before the Supreme Being; the greater portion of them were atheists, not deists."¹ In short, the Girondins were democrats; therefore it was inevitable that the exponents of Rousseau's "elective aristocracy" came into clash with the original leaders of the revolution, those who stood loyally by the ideas and ideals of the Enlightenment, in other words, incorporated the outcome of man's age-long struggle for freedom.

The election of the National Convention was the occasion for the final trial of strength between the adherents of the two ideas of revolution: the rationalists, but no less revolutionary champions of Humanism and liberty; and the passionate preachers of equality, a deceptive ideal because it was utopian. The real difference between the two contending forces can be judged from the appeal to "democratic voters" issued on behalf of the latter: "Men who are too much inclined to think, belong to a superior species, they must not be elected." Thinking should be subordinated to feeling. Reason was at a discount; and emotions ran riot. The revolution came to be dominated by the spirit of Rousseau personified by Robespierre.

But the effect of the Enlightenment was too deep to be so easily extinguished. Emotionalism expressed itself in a demonstrative worship of Reason. Anti-religious propaganda spread through-

out the country. Finally, the President of the Convention declared: "As the Supreme Being desires no worship other than the worship of Reason, that should in future be the national religion." Pierre Gaspard Chaumette promptly obtained from the all-powerful Commune of Paris a resolution "to celebrate the triumph of Reason over the prejudices of eighteen centuries". Notre Dame should be transformed into a Temple of Reason. That fervour of rationalism, however, was degrading the sublime to the ridiculous. Danton frowned upon it, but his protest was rather a subtle hint in the opposite direction: the enthusiasts who talked of bad poetry instead of good sense. "I desire to hear nothing but reason in prose at the bar." Robespierre's reaction was different; his purpose was to destroy a tendency, represented by the Hebertists, which was spreading throughout the country threatening to overwhelm the pious spirit of the Vicar of Savoy. He encouraged his trusted lieutenants—Jean Marie D'Harbris Collot, Georges Couthon, C.F.de Payan and others—to oppose the cult of Reason, openly denouncing it as "licentious orgy." The tone of their public pronouncement began to be frankly deists. But the time was not yet come for the prophet of Jean-Jacques to put on the robe of the High-Priest of a new religion presiding over the slaughter of revolutionaries.

When the National Convention assembled at the end of 1792 Robespierre, though elected from a Parisian constituency, defeating the Girondist Jerome de Villeneuve Petion, was still far from being the leader of the Mountain, which had already become a live volcano belching forth fire and brimstone. Even then only a few followed him. Between 1789 and 1791, his cants had received little hearing in an Assembly dominated by towering personalities and intellectual giants who led the revolution. That humiliating memory was somewhat assuaged by his electoral triumph. But a more formidable rival was appearing on the scene. Paris also elected Danton to the Convention with a greater number of votes than cast for Robespierre. The Convention was clearly divided, the groupings being according to cultural tradition, intellectual conviction, temperament and political creed.

The revolution had taken place; what will be the shape of the future of the new regime? The Girondists advocated a democratic republic in which human rights would be guaranteed. The Mountain was divided: Danton, in his heart of hearts, agreed with the

Girondists; Robespierre also was an extremist. As regards property, he did not yield to his opponents. But he was a fanatical believer in social contract; and therefore was not a democrat. He wanted to create a vehicle for the operation of the General Will, which would force everybody to be free. He relied upon the support of Paris—then the boiling cauldron of unbridled emotion and Romanticism of the utopian variety. But the Commune of Paris was dominated by the Hebertists who had taken Rousseau's doctrine literally, and therefore could also be fanatical evangelists of the cult of Reason. They were not only terrorists, but communists as well. They stood for everything that the sanctimonious moralist Robespierre detested. They would follow Danton rather than Robespierre, if it came to a choice.

Between the two groups contending for the leadership of the triumphant revolution, sat the vast majority of deputies, an amorphous, irresolute, silent mass called the Plain or the Marsh.

The clash broke out fiercely during the trial of the king. The Mountain demanded summary execution, and their agitation with that blood-thirsty demand stirred up all the evil passions of the Parisian populace. To make political capital out of that emotional outburst, Robespierre and his associates accused the Girondists of monarchism! The men who had brought down the monarchy and compelled the demoralised nobility to surrender when Robespierre was still an unknown provincial lawyer! True to their humane culture and love of toleration, they saw no sense in taking the life of a helpless man, who out of sheer fright might have acted stupidly. Emotion clashed with intelligence; fanaticism with tolerance; demagoguery with honest concern for democracy; in the last analysis, the claim of "elective aristocracy" to absolute power with faith in orderly democracy. The deputies of the Centre were terrorised by the madness of the Parisian populace. Anybody suspected of sympathy for the king would be killed. Madame Roland wrote in her diary: "Almost all our deputies now go about armed to the teeth. How delightful is the liberty of Paris!" Before long, she had to pay dearly for such frivolous sentiments, as an offering at the bloody altar of the delightful liberty!!

The mass of deputies being so terrorised, the Girondists failed to move the Convention to be compassionate to the miserable man who was a king, but was no more. Thereupon, they proposed that the king's fate be referred to the judgment of the people—a humane

desire and a perfectly democratic procedure. Robespierre was alarmed. The blood-thirsty Parisian populace could not terrorise the whole country. A correct judgment on the respective moral stamina of the parties was pronounced by La Revelliere—a partisan of Robespierre: "I must acknowledge that it involved more courage at that particular moment to absolve than to condemn." Each member was to mount the rostrum to vote, and his name must be called out. There were people in the gallery to prepare the black list. The moral courage to have risked the rage of fanaticism sealed the fate of the fathers of the revolution. The pathos of that dramatic moment drew the truth out of Robespierre; the master spoke through him, and the curtain of cant was lifted upon the shape of things to come. The would-be dictator declared: "Virtue has always been in a minority on earth."

The Reign of Terror began with the execution of twenty-two leading Girondists—"these men, young, four of them under thirty, and eight not yet forty, and full of talent, all of them to die, crushed out of life by the vilest hatred, without for one moment losing faith in freedom and the brotherhood of man."² Hebert, destined to be the next victim, invoked the General Will as a sanction for that crime against civilised mankind: "Need there be so much ceremony about shortening the bodies of wretches already sentenced by the people?" The Convention was the place where individual wills cancelled one another; the General Will which survived that orgy of self-elimination, or rather resulted from it, had found its medium of expression in the Paris Commune, soon to be replaced by the Jacobin club dominated by Robespierre.

On that tragic day, Madame Roland wrote in her diary, "It may be that pure victims are needed to call forth the reign of justice." Only a few days passed before she was arrested for "perverting the public mind." Having spent three months in prison, she was placed on trial, not to defend herself but to praise the men who had preceded her to the guillotine. She was however not allowed to speak; she was "eulogising crime". The flowers of eighteenth century manhood, not only of France but of the entire civilised world, were criminals! How far the revolution had deviated from its ideas and ideals.

Now terror turned on the terrorists themselves. At the same time, it began to justify its cruelties with moral cants and profession of piety. The spirit of the Vicar of Savoy had taken possession of the

revolution. Chaumette and Herault de Sechelles went to the guillotine accused of atheism. Indicting them before the Convention, St. Just exclaimed in pious indignation: "They deny the immortality of the soul, which was the consolation of the dying Socrates." Hebert and his followers also died condemned of "bad morals". Those men had learned from Rousseau to look upon property as the cause of all evils. They wanted its destruction. But the real evangelist of Rousseau's gospel was Robespierre who had grasped the master's philosophy and tried to act accordingly at the cost of the revolution. He had as much respect for property as faith in the virtue of minorities, and also in the Supreme Being, whose will he believed to be working through himself. He could not allow the virtue of the minority to be soiled by the communism as well as atheism of the men who had raised him to power, even if they also swore by the *Social Contract*.

By the autumn of 1793, the situation on the frontiers changed, and Danton began his campaign for clemency. He realised that terror was destroying the revolution: the Revolutionary Tribunal he had set up was becoming an instrument of vindictiveness. What was devised as a temporary means was becoming a permanent institution. He did not see any reason why unnecessary terror should not be relaxed without the Committee losing its authority. Robespierre appeared to agree. But the temperament and character of the two clashed. Danton was full-blooded and frank; he believed in enjoying life and knew how to laugh. Robespierre was a Puritan, a prig, ascetic, humourless—a dry lawyer from a country town. Danton openly made fun of his perpetual talk of virtue, and outraged him by his virility and love of life. He had no personal ambition, while Robespierre was preparing for his dictatorship with cool calculation and wearisome persistence. Danton was a typical democrat, and was careless about reputation.

Danton had been biding his time. He was not a worshipper of Rousseau. Combining reason and emotion, he was a true revolutionary. After the fall of the Girondists, he was the natural leader of the revolution. He must go if Robespierre was to be secure on the throne of the High-Priest of the cult of revolution turned into a blood-thirsty religion. St. Just gave expression to the fear which always haunts dictators: "If we do not guillotine him, we shall be guillotined ourselves." Danton was warned in time; he could appear before the Convention and sway it by his oratory, as he

had done so very often previously. He could still save the revolution. But he was tired. On hearing of the plot against himself, he said: "I would rather be guillotined than guillotine others; and besides, I am sick of the human race." It was the voice of nobleness as well as of humanity. Even if all his acts of courage, devotion and statesmanship were not taken into account, only for those last words Danton should be recognised as the greatest man of the revolution; and as such he fell. Having degenerated into a blood-thirsty religion, preaching hypocrisy, the revolution no longer needed great and good men; the time had come for small and mean men to invoke an imaginary supernatural power to hide their smallness and talk of abstract goodness to guild their meanness.

Robespierre's notorious *Notes* against Danton, on the basis of which St. Just prepared his Report to the Convention demanding Danton's head, was a pile of mean and malicious gossip. Through them all pierced the spleen of a small mind: careless sentences uttered by Danton in private conversations; innuendoes about his well known love affairs, of eating and drinking and laughing; wrong motives were attributed to his tireless attempt to strike a compromise between the Gironde and the Montagne, in order to avoid bloodshed. Robespierre complained that Danton laughed at the word virtue, and that his claim to the virtue of his normal and healthy married life proved that he had no idea of morality and was not fit to talk of liberty. Robespierre's peevishness became almost insane hatred.

Robespierre himself proclaimed the greatness and goodness of the genuine revolutionary Danton when he argued his case for the destruction of the latter. "A man is guilty against the Republic when he takes pity on prisoners; he is guilty because he has no desire for virtue; he is guilty because he is opposed to terror." What a perverse notion of virtue! The hypocritical moralist directly proceeded to explain what he meant: "In time of peace, the springs of popular government are in virtue; but in times of revolution, they are both in virtue and in terror."

Robespierre could not kill Danton, if the latter wanted to resist. He was still the most powerful man, most magnetic personality. But he had realised his error of having taken the wrong side in the struggle between reason and romanticism, between the advocates of orderly progress and democratic freedom, and the roman-

tic revolutionaries who could be swayed by undisciplined emotion, and misled and misused by the cunning of ambitious fanatics. That was an initial tactical blunder, not an error of judgment; because, Danton never allowed emotions, though he was a man of strong and noble emotions, to overwhelm his intellect and influence his judgment. Nevertheless, the initial mistake pushed him to a direction he did not wish to go. He was mainly responsible for setting up the Revolutionary Tribunal—that merciless instrument of terror; within the year, he fell a victim himself, because he wanted to stop that madness. But it was too late; uncontrollable evil passions ran riot. Therefore he did not feel the urge to save himself, and perhaps save thereby the revolution, when the chilly hand of fate fell on his shoulders. He practically welcomed death as a relief.

In the evening, the fatal news reached him; he sat listless and brooding by the fireside until the morning when the cruel hand of death seized him. The day before his trial, he was heard to mutter: "It was at this time of last year that I had the Revolutionary Tribunal set up; I pray to God and men to forgive me." The cruellest irony of his fate was that the same Tribunal refused to hear him. At the last moment, the great human dynamo shook off his inertia and wanted to tell the truth before death silenced his powerful voice for ever. The "incorruptible" champion of "virtue and justice" was alarmed, Danton might still sway the Convention, and call upon the Parisian populace to rise once again in a mighty insurrection to hurl down the new tyrants who had replaced the old. For the sake of "virtue", the President of the Tribunal, that custodian of revolutionary justice, was ordered to put the gag on Danton, and give him the short shrift. But the Tribunal trembled when its founder was brought before it, accused of conspiracy against the revolution. Before it could recover from the shock and do as ordered, Danton had his say: "Danton, an aristocrat! France will not believe that story. I have sold myself! No money can buy a man like me! My name is associated with every revolutionary institution—the levy, the revolutionary army, the revolutionary committees, the Committee of Public Safety, the Revolutionary Tribunal." Then he uttered the great tragic truth: "Why, I have brought about my own death!"

It was not repentance; it was a warning for future revolutionaries. Man makes history; but his potentially unlimited creative-

ness is limited by the available material; revolutions take place of necessity, and sometimes they may even be inevitable; but their pattern cannot be fitted into any preconceived plan. The artist creates out of his imagination; but a revolutionary is not an artist to that extent. The attempt to impose the will of an individual or a group of individuals on history, that is to say, on the will of the rest, is bound to have evil or disastrous consequences. That was the lesson Danton, one of the greatest revolutionaries of history, had learned from experience. His last message for the future fighters for human freedom was to remember that lesson learned at a great cost.

When the gag was applied, the lion roared: "Do you take us for conspirators?" The hall resounded with a Homeric laughter: "Write down that he laughed." The grand finale of the drama of a great life. Only free spirits, attached to nothing, not even to their own lives, can be great fighters for human freedom.

In *Danton's Death*, Buechner depicts Danton as the great romanticist of the French Revolution. "I condemn the dust of which I am made, this dust that speaks to you now. It can be persecuted. It can be brought to death. But I challenge the world to take from me that part of me which will live through the centuries and survive in the skies." (Danton, at his trial).

The death of Danton was the signal for counter-revolution which took place under the banner of Rousseau's new religion preached by his political Pontif, Robespierre. He established his "reign of virtue" protected by an intensified terror. "Apart from virtue, terror is baneful; but virtue is powerless, without terror." That was the moral sanction of Robespierre's dictatorship. But he wanted to place virtue on a more abiding foundation. Terror could not last for ever. The worship of the Supreme Being as conceived by the Vicar of Savoy and prescribed in the revolutionary Bible, must be established to wipe out the memory of the cult of reason. But the Convention still harboured members who had imbibed the spirit of the Enlightenment. So, Robespierre had to proceed step by step.

Robespierre appeared to the majority of his fellow countrymen, and throughout Europe, as the ruler of France. By didactic speeches, frigid and unassailable persistency in public affairs, his unswerving parade of virtue, and his ceaseless in public affairs, his he succeeded in imposing upon multitudes a false idea of power. Finally, he decided that he might make himself in fact what others

thought him to be—a tyrant, the dictator.

He controlled the Convention and the Paris Commune; he swayed the Jacobin Club by his oratory; Hanriot, the Commander of the Paris garrison, was his follower. The opposition was inside the all-powerful Committee of Public Safety. While all the members of the Committee except Le Bas were opposed to him, Robespierre relied upon the loyalty of St. Just who controlled the army. The popularity which he had so laboriously built up during five years was his armour—the legend of virtue, incorruptibility and lack of personal ambition.

When Robespierre admitted to himself his desire to be the all-powerful ruler, he felt the necessity of establishing himself as the High Priest of a State religion. He resolved that the worship of Reason must end. Letters came in daily hailing him as the new Messiah. The incident of Cecile Renault (caught with a knife in front of his residence) proved that Robespierre's life was under the protection of the Supreme Being. The first miracle of the new religion thus happened.

Striking a Voltairean pose, so very incongruous to his austere piety, he declared: "If there had been no God, we should have been obliged to invent him." The cynicism of Voltaire's famous remark was hardly concealed. It was meant to expose the oppressive social significance of religion. But Robespierre spoke out of the sincerity of his heart. The respective values of cynicism and sincerity are to be judged by the underlying purpose. A few days later, the prophet presumptive was more outspoken. The issue was raised no longer hypothetically. "The idea of a Great Being who watches over oppressed innocence, and punishes triumphant crime, is a thoroughly popular one."

Meanwhile, the terror reached the climax, of course, in the service of virtue; the Convention was thoroughly purged, and the public tired out and cowed down. The auspicious moment had come. The Convention and the public were informed that the Committee of Public Safety had decided to hold a "Festival of the Supreme Being." While making the announcement, Couthon said: "Pure souls felt recognition and adoration of a superior Intelligence to be a real need." Moving the adoption of the decree, the would-be Pontif delivered the famous oration on "The Relation Between Religious and Moral Ideas and Republican Principles". He concluded by proclaiming the necessity for the establishment of a deistic religion.

The revolution was undone. The king had gone; but the divine right to rule was resurrected. The Social Contract was a make-believe; the republican principles of Robespierre had a religious sanction; and he set up the dogma on the authority of the bible of revolutionaries. Hume said that Rousseau "had only felt all his life"; he tried also to think, but allowed his ideas to be muddled by sentimentality and the morbid passion to be didactic. That is why he visualised a political institution reared upon the basis of social contract which nullified the basic hypothesis of his political science.

‡ Robespierre was neither emotional nor sentimental; he was cool and calculating; nor was he much of a thinker; he was a schemer. A man of ordinary intelligence, he was full of cunning. He was a fanatic also; therefore, he was sincere. He fanatically believed himself to be a man of destiny—an instrument of the Supreme Being. The king was gone; Robespierre inherited the divine right to rule. He established not a democratic state, nor even Rousseau's elective aristocracy. Robespierre attained the zenith of his career as the head of a theocratic state. The Festival of the Supreme Being was celebrated with all religious rituals; a special hymn was written for the occasion. Robespierre presided on the ceremony, standing on the summit of a symbolic mountain, shrouded in a thick fume of incense, a hundred-thousand voice chanted the praise of the Lord. "For a moment, the Vicar of God fancied he was himself God."³ He descended from his elevated seat to set fire to a gigantic statue of Atheism. Nearby, there was also the statue of Wisdom, who was to rise out of the ashes. But the fire that consumed Atheism also blackened the face of Wisdom. There was laughter all around. Always very sensitive to ridicule, Robespierre perceived hostility on all sides.

The "Law of Parairal," issued on June 10th, was his reply to the humiliation and bitter disillusionment of June 8th (Feast of the Supreme Being). The object was to clear from his path all who opposed or even criticised him. It was also his own death warrant, for it established complete tyranny. He drafted the law with his own hand. It gave the Committee of Public Safety power to put to death any suspect without a trial—there would be no witness, no appeal, no counsel to defend.

After his fall, one of the Thermidoreans, Tallien, remarked cynically: "He would have turned the Eternal out of his place to take

it for himself." That remark of one of his intimate colleagues perhaps is the best summary of the biography of a man who sincerely believed in the revolutionary gospel of Rousseau, and pursued the false ideal with a fierce fanaticism. But no man, not even the greatest, can attempt to make history according to a set plan conceived in imagination, without courting disaster.

While warning future revolutionaries against the lure of "creative imagination", Danton knew that disaster awaited Robespierre also. "Vile Robespierre! The scaffold claims you too. You will follow me." And he did, before the despotism of his "reign of virtue" was three months old. Robespierre wanted to use terror to make himself the unchallenged ruler of France. But he opposed it when it became an instrument in the hand of others also. Fouché wrote later: He had but one step to take to become the master of the Revolution—but he had to have some thirty more heads." Robespierre needed the support of his only loyal friend against the growing hostility inside the Committee of Public Safety. He sent an urgent call to St. Just to return to Paris from the front. According to Barère, St. Just proposed in a meeting of the Committee that Robespierre be appointed dictator. However, St. Just tried to restore unity in the Committee, but Robespierre was sulky and often broke down in outbursts of self-pity.

The word virtue appears in the speeches of St. Just almost as often as in those of Robespierre. But the latter's virtue was a pale and negative thing—a theory. By virtue, St. Just meant a vigorous self-discipline, the practice of austerity, to make a man worthy of liberty and give him a hunger for justice. He believed that a whole nation could base its daily life on virtue, provided that those who governed it set the example. Having no personal ambition, he allowed no risk to deter him, not any scruple to stand in his way. The dishonourable part he played in the overthrow and death of Danton and his friends is easily understood when it is realised that those men were demanding a less vigorous application of terror. Danton was more representative of the ordinary Frenchman than St. Just, who was a fanatic, and the fanatic has no use for the happy-go-lucky laughter of Danton.

The conflict between the Gironde and the Montagne, taught St. Just the lesson that democracy could not be established without a compromise. But the lesson embittered him. He felt that sensible men would not accept that dream as a reality. How could a

revolution be possible without the use of force? Montesquieu had taught that virtue was the moving principle of the Republic. But St. Just realised that she must walk the earth with a sword in hand.

The Gironde stood for a federal republic with local autonomy curbing the power at the centre. St. Just believed in central authority. His conviction was reinforced by mass desertion from the front in the spring of 1793. He realised the necessity of a strong centre—"one strong centralised will." The nation must recognise command; the whole country must be placed under martial law.

St. Just shared Rousseau's belief that in his primitive state man was good and simple, that the return to that state was possible. Wisely and justly governed, man will remain virtuous and happy. According to him, the first and most important principle of government was that the General Will of the people must be expressed by an elected and essentially deliberative Assembly. The sovereignty of the people cannot be delegated, nor even represented, because the will of the people is indivisible.

He argued that Condorcet had considered the General Will only in its intellectual aspect, and had therefore depraved it. He tried to rationalise it. The true will of the people must be conceived as a material thing, and not as a philosophical speculation—an expression of active interest.

Danton wanted that under the Republic the people should have a happy carefree life, full of human weaknesses. St. Just advocated a life of austerity and frugality, and maintained that that would be the really happy life, because happiness meant a virtuous existence.

St. Just believed that he would read the Report in the presence of Danton. When the Committee issued the warrant of his arrest before the Report was read, St. Just was in a moral crisis. He saw that he had been used for a base purpose: He must choose between his own honour and that of the Republic. He chose the latter and justified the choice with the following argument: "Those who reproach us with our severity, would they prefer us to be unjust? It little matters what diverse vanities time has led to the scaffold, to the cemetery, to nothingness, if only liberty survives. What is a man? What is even the greatest of us, when the permanent establishment of our Republic is in question?"

Robespierre's last act was one of perfidy. In a carefully prepared speech to the Convention, he held other members of the Com-

mittee of Public Safety responsible for everything done under his order, against which there was a rising revulsion of feeling. He actually incited the Convention to overthrow the Committee of Public Safety. Pathetically, the all-powerful pleaded powerlessness. Owing to the perversity and selfishness of others, his closest associates the "incorruptible" paragon of all virtue could neither do any good nor check evil. What is the remedy of the disease? There followed the peroration—perfidious, cowardly, treacherous. "To punish the traitors, renew the composition of the Committee; constitute a united government under the Supreme authority of the Convention; crush all factions by the weight of the national authority, and raise the power of justice and liberty." How differently Danton would have spoken, had he cared to move the Convention!

Falsifying Robespierre's sophisticated cant, the Terror had disintegrated morals and driven virtue out of his kingdom. Spirit of revenge, fear, selfishness and other ignoble and base sentiments prevailed. Realising that thieves had fallen out amongst themselves, the terrorised, dejected and demoralised convention suddenly felt its power. In the midst of confusion and consternation, Cambon rushed to the rostrum to pay his treacherous chief in his own coin. He cried: "Before I am dishonoured, I will speak to France; one man alone paralyses the will of the Convention; that man is Robespierre." The all-powerful despot of yesterday sneaked out of the uproarious Convention, a beaten and crestfallen man. He tried to rally the Jacobin Club in his support. But his star was declining rapidly. He must face his fate. The next day, he tried several times to address the Convention, with no success. Finally, when he did manage to make himself heard, it was not the authoritative voice of a dictator; it was the pathetic appeal of a fallen despot frantically trying to escape his doom. The appeal was addressed not to the revolutionary benches, but to the despised centre. "Men of purity, men of virtue! I appeal to you! Give me the leave to speak which these murderers refuse me." What a shameful end! Like an animal at bay, he ran hither and thither, appealing, supplicating but enraged. Conflicting emotions stifled his once sonorous voice which had seduced so many for such a long time. Someone shouted: "The blood of Danton chokes thee!" The Convention voted for the arrest of the fallen despot; the gendarme took away a completely broken man with four of his assoc-

iates. Thus ended the career of the most faithful follower of Rousseau.

The old regime was overthrown easily without violence, thanks to the profound psychological revolution accomplished by the Enlightenment. Then, owing to accidental combination of circumstances, the leadership of the successful political and social revolution passed on to a different type of men. Intellectual immaturity and thoughtless enthusiasm brought them under the spell of a deceptive cult of revolution, which meant a reaction to the spirit of the eighteenth century, and therefore a negation of man's capacity to be free and virtuous. The revival of the worship of the Supreme Being meant voluntary relapse into spiritual slavery, the revolt against which was the motive of the entire history of modern civilisation. That is the significance of Rousseau's condemnation of civilisation, which was taken for a righteous indignation, a spiritual revolt against the corruption, immorality and cynicism of the age of Louis XIV. The noble savage was a fiction, but the romantic cult of revolution did plunge its devotees into savagery which was neither noble nor virtuous.

Louis Blanc, who believed to have inherited through Baboeuf Rousseau's spirit of revolt against private property, wrote: "It is a falsehood to say that the Terror saved France, but it may be affirmed that it crippled the revolution." It certainly did; and the general revulsion against it made it easy for Neopoleon to establish his dictatorship.

The French Revolution was not the experience of one particular country; it was not an event in the annals of one nation. The men of the revolution did not appeal to the past glory of France. They drew their inspiration from the classical antiquity. They burned all ancient charters and documents. Even cultural nationalism had no lure for them. Gothic cathedrals were looked upon as "monuments of barbarism and superstition", which were also to be destroyed. The revolution marked a turning point in the history of Europe. Its repercussions were felt far beyond the frontiers of France. When the Republican armies defeated the interventionist forces at Valmy, Goethe wrote: "From here and now, a new epoch of world history begins." Therefore, the French Revolution has been called the Great Revolution. It is the logical outcome of the struggle for human freedom, which had been waged through several centuries.⁴ As such, it ushered in a whole period during which

time-honoured political institutions and traditional social relations were challenged all over Europe; in one country after another, absolute monarchies tumbled and the feudal social order was disrupted. "The movement which took the form of revolution in France was the movement common to all Europe, of the transformation of feudal institutions into those of the modern State."⁵

Those revolutionary events were brought about by the instrumentality of Napoleon's army. "Wherever in Europe the armies of revolutionary France appeared, the old patriarchal and feudal order was swept away. From Paris, the officers of Alexander I carried the message to Russia, where it profoundly influenced the rising young Russian intelligentsia."⁶ The army led by Napoleon, however, was not his creation. It was created by the revolution; Napoleon himself was a part of that creation. Therefore, notwithstanding his personal predilections, his role in history was objectively revolutionary. He was neither an upstart nor an adventurer. As a sensitive as well as an ambitious young man, he had imbibed the spirit of the eighteenth century in his own way.

Voltairean by temperament and intellectual training, Napoleon was no admirer of Rousseau. When still a subordinate of the Directoire, he bluntly remarked: "Your Rousseau was a madman; it is he who has brought us to this pass." Yet, he put Rousseau's political doctrine into practice more successfully than Robespierre. He had evidently learned his political lesson from the *Social Contract*. The cardinal principle of the Napoleonic politics was the following: "A great nation must have a centre of unity. Twenty-five million of men cannot live in a republic. This is an unpolitical slogan." Young Bonaparte expressed this view already in 1789. The Napoleonic regime could be properly called a "democratic despotism". It could claim the mystic sanction of the General Will obtained through three successive plebiscites.

At the same time, Napoleon also succeeded in what Danton had failed, namely, to consolidate the new regime on the basis of the initial achievements of the revolution.⁷ He established order out of chaos without in any way compromising the basic result of the revolution—end of the feudal social order. That fundamental aspect of the revolution had laid down the social basis of the military power which France attained under Napoleon. The revolution gave land to the peasantry. And the French peasantry, in return for the gift, supplied Napoleon with soldiers to conquer Europe

and the conquest meant spread of the revolution—overthrow of monarchist absolutism and destruction of feudalism in the conquered countries.

"He had no desire to restore the Bourbons and feudalism; on the contrary, the destruction of the *ancien regime* was the presupposition of all his work. It was that which he conceived to be the essential work of the revolution. He first realised in fact what the revolution had proclaimed in theory: that public burdens should fall upon all, and public offices be open to all. He took no count of birth or political antecedents; talent and loyalty to himself were his sole criterion of merit."⁸

The philosophers who had inspired the revolution thought in terms of humanity as a whole. When Madame Roland declared that she had a "cosmopolitan soul", she spoke for all of them. During the discussion of the "Declaration of Rights", one deputy explained: "We desire to make a declaration for all men, for all time, for every country, that will be an example to the whole world." That was the spirit of the revolution. The ideal was attained by the revolutionary army of Napoleon.

"Bonaparte was a child of the revolution, equally in the sense that, like so many other brilliant men, he was enabled by reason of that great social convulsion to come to the forefront of affairs, as also because his youthful mind had been formed by the literature of criticism and revolt which had heralded the storm. The amazing preponderance over Europe which France obtained (under Napoleon) is not only to be explained by the genius of its leader, but is also due to the fact that by the destruction of privilege the best talent of the highly civilised countries of the West was available for his service. Men of science were given (ministerial) portfolios. The Council of State was the most efficient body of experts which Europe had yet seen. For the most part, the Marshals of the victorious army had risen by merit from the ranks."⁹

The rationalist spirit of Danton survived Robespierre's fanaticism; science got the better of sentimentality; reason reasserted itself in the atmosphere of romantic extravagance. Having thus recovered from the crisis in its earlier stages, the revolution crossed the frontiers of France to pull down the older order in other countries. Napoleonism was the revolution in its expansionist phase. It rose as reaction to the endeavour of the forces of international conservatism to crush the revolution in its infancy. The military

phase of the revolution did not begin with the rise of Napoleonism. It began when, confronted with the danger of foreign intervention, Danton advocated the "*levee en masse*" of the "nation at arms". On that new broad social basis, Carnot organised the army of the revolution which, having first defended revolutionary France, subsequently, under Napoleon's command, carried to other European countries the message of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. Napoleon's new strategy and tactics were determined by the structures and composition of the army he commanded. The old order in one country after another collapsed when the professional soldiery of feudal monarchs proved to be utterly incapable of resisting the onslaught of the new type of army born out of the revolution. The *levee en masse* mobilised the flower of French manhood for the defence of the revolution. Most of the famous Marshals of Napoleon began their meteoric military career as common soldiers in those early days of revolutionary enthusiasm. One of them, Victor, originally a drummer, exclaimed when he became one of Napoleon's Marshals: "Oh, splendid outburst of 1791! Would that I could extol thee worthily." Marmont, another of them corroborated: "We lived in an atmosphere of light; I feel its heat and power at fifty-five, just as I felt it the first day."

The army which swept away the old order practically throughout Europe was commanded by Generals who incorporated the heroic and liberating tradition of the revolution—the victors of the battles of Champagne, Lorraine, Belgium, Valmy, Jemmappes; and it was manned by the French peasantry, which had risen in revolt successfully against feudalism. It was an army of revolution in every sense; and its leader, Napoleon, was a standard-bearer of the revolution; no matter whatever might have been his personal motive. "The army had become far more republican than the nation in general. It was in the throes of a genuine paroxysm of civic feeling. Never was there such an exhibition of mystic faith: their faith saved them. They (the Generals of the revolutionary army) put the Marseillaise into action."¹⁰

Militarily, the revolution had triumphed even before the rise of Napoleon. After the fall of Robespierre and the end of the Reign of Terror, followers of Danton came to the helm of affairs, and the Girondins reappeared in public life. The situation at home eased, if not yet quite restored to normalcy, the Directoire could turn its undivided attention towards the frontiers. The "Organiser of Vic-

tory", Carnot, was still at the head of the Ministry of Defence. Over-run by the revolutionary army, Holland became the Republic of Batavia. Belgium, together with all the territories as far as the Rhine, was incorporated in the French Republic. The frontier was pushed forward similarly towards Italy. Defeated repeatedly on the battle-fields by the revolutionary army, Prussia, Spain and Tuscany withdrew from the anti-revolutionary alliance. By 1795, the revolution had reached the stage of the final showdown; for the mastery of Europe, it must break the resistance of "the two Powers in the world which represented in their strongest and most pernicious form the counter-revolutionary spirit—Protestant Britain and Catholic Austria."¹¹ The former being firmly entrenched behind the waves, ruled by her Navy, the strategy of the revolutionary war was first to acquire the mastery of the continent by reducing the Power of Austria. Italy was the most vulnerable point in her armour; and was therefore, together with other reasons, chosen as the first object of the revolutionary offensive. Napoleon was in command of the operation. His days had come, and he rose up to the occasion. "The young men who followed Bonaparte across the mountains into Italy still believed that France had a liberating message to give to the world."¹² Their object was not to conquer a foreign country, but to launch the Italian people on the new way of life, which had been blazed by the revolution. Napoleon's proclamation to the Italian People was couched in the corresponding tone. "Peoples of Italy! The French Army comes to break your chains; the French people is the friend of all peoples; meet us with confidence. Your property, your religion and your usages will be respected. We have no quarrel save with the tyrants who enslave you."

The spectacular success of the Italian campaign turned the head of young Napoleon. He was fired with the ambition of himself becoming the ruler of Europe by skilfully wielding an instrument created by the revolution. Nevertheless, the French Army was hailed as the liberator, and actually brought about a political change and precipitated a social upheaval wherever it went. "In the history of the Italian people, the first campaign of Bonaparte marks the beginning of that resurgence of national feeling which is known as the *Risorgimento*. Though he was severe, he seemed to come as a liberator, bringing with him the breath of a new freedom and wide-ranging prospects of Italian power. Much was for-

given to the young General who broke the Austrian stranglehold on the Italian people, and invited them to work the institutions of a modern State. The Italian *literati* praised him to the skies; the best Lombards crowded to his Court; and the Cisalpine Republic, though resting on French bayonets, acted for many years as a state in a land where the tradition of public duty had long been atrophied by foreign rule."¹³

Even more revolutionary were the effects of Napoleon's conquests of Germany. Until then, there had been no Germany; Napoleon brought her into existence. She rose out of the fierce clash between the ideas of the revolution heralding a new social order and the mediaevalism incorporated by the 360 feudal principalities held together precariously by their allegiance to the Holy Roman Empire, reduced to a fiction by that time. All historians agree that under the impact of the French Revolution, transmitted through Napoleon's army, Germany emerged from the long lingering twilight of mediaevalism, and came under the influence of modern civilisation. All the great leaders of the belated German Renaissance were admirers of the French Revolution. Goethe, for example, welcomed the genius and saluted the conquests of Napoleon. It was during the period of subjugation by Napoleon's army that Germany reached the summit of her literary glory and spiritual influence, and made the greatest contribution to modern European culture. "It is a remarkable fact that the zenith of German literature belongs to an age of political impotence and division, when Goethe and Schiller were friends at Weimar, and German patriotism stood at its lowest ebb. The defeat of the French Emperor at the battle of Leipzig came to him (Goethe) as a disappointment, and the greatest lyric poet of Germany makes no contribution to the literature of the War of Liberation."¹⁴

While intellectual activity and modern culture thrived in the Rhine Federation, Prussia remained the home of feudal reaction, which resisted the powerful impact of the revolutionary ideas. It combatted Napoleon and his army not merely as foreign invaders, but as the standard-bearer of rationalism, liberalism and the rule of law. But even after Waterloo, Germany could not throw off the influence of revolution. Under that influence, Stein introduced his agrarian reform in Prussia. The French conqueror had emancipated the peasantry in adjacent Poland and Westphalia. Prussia could not be immune from the repercussion of that rev-

olutionary event. The so-called War of Liberation represented a conflict between nationalism promoted by Prussia and the cosmopolitan spirit of the great European revolution. Finally, the latter triumphed, though for a short while, in the revolution of 1848.

Nor could England keep herself altogether out of the reach of the influence of the revolution. Subversive social doctrines had crossed the English Channel before Napoleon's abortive attempt to do so. They inspired a popular movement which swept over the island; though the Chartist movement fell short of a revolution, the passage of the first Reforms Act was compelled and the ground for the second was prepared. In spite of Burke, political events in Britain during the first half of the nineteenth century moved under the shadow of the revolution stalking over the continent; and the intellectual life consisted in efforts to concretise the principles of the philosophy of the revolution so as to render them applicable in practice. Literature, particularly poetry, was influenced by the romanticism of Rousseau, while scientific naturalism predominated philosophy. In short, the Great Revolution was felt in every walk of life in Britain also.

The Code Napoleon was the most abiding positive achievement of the revolution. It provided the secular State with a solid legal foundation. The administration of civil society no longer needed the sanction of the will of a despotic monarch nor of the Divine Providence. The pioneering efforts of a whole succession of philosophical jurists ever since the fifteenth century at last yielded a rich harvest. Napoleon completed the revolution not only by destroying the old feudal order throughout Europe, but also by his much greater achievement was to provide secular sanction to a civil order based upon social equality and religious tolerance. For the first time in history, social life was made independent of priestly tutelage. The philosophy of human freedom developed over a period of centuries was at last given a shape capable of practical application. After several centuries of struggle, the revolt of man culminated in the triumph of the Great Revolution. Therefore, Michelet called it the Second Renaissance.

NOTES

1. Madelin, *The French Revolution*.
2. Madelin, *The French Revolution*.

3. Madelin, *The French Revolution*.
4. "The eighteenth century led straight to the cataracts of revolution—and a revolution that was not merely the overthrow of a government, but the destruction of a whole ancient order of society, and the emergence of forces and ideas of social life whose existence had not been recognised before. Now a vast revolution, such as this, does not arise out of nothing: Its roots are deep in the past, and its slow subterranean growth can be traced, even though it be among the most obscure and least noticed events of preceding generations. This is manifestly true of the French Revolution, and it explains why the eighteenth century can be described as the 'seed time of modern Europe'. For, the French Revolution is the eighteenth century in action. The ideas which governed the revolution are the ideas evolved by the century, and the same ideas, expressed in the revolution, dominated the subsequent age. Thus, a chaotic melee, void of meaning in the world of politics, in the world of thought, the eighteenth century can justly be considered the great formative age of modern Europe. Its ideas guided the revolution, they are the ideas on which the nineteenth century has lived." (Alfred Cobben, *Edmund Burke and the Revolt Against the Eighteenth Century*.)
5. G. Lowes Dickinson, *Revolution and Reaction in Modern France*.
6. J.P. Mayer, *Political Thought in France from Sieyès to Sorel*.
7. "We have finished the romance of the revolution; it is time to begin its history, to note only what is real and possible in the application of its principles, and to ignore all that is merely speculative and hypothetical." (Napoleon).
8. G. Lowes Dickinson, *Revolution and Reaction in Modern France*.
9. Fisher, *History of Europe*.
10. Madelin, *The French Revolution*.
11. Fisher, *The History of Europe*.
12. Ibid.
13. Fisher, *The History of Europe*.
14. Fisher, *The History of Europe*.

Chapter XII

REACTION AND ROMANTICISM

The Intellectual movement after the Restoration and also under the July Monarchy has been characterised as a revolt against the eighteenth century. It was not limited to France; as a reaction against the Great Revolution, it also marked a phase in the history of modern culture. But it was a passing phase which had a deeper and more lasting significance only in Germany. As a matter of fact, the "revolt against the eighteenth century" began in Germany under the banner of nationalism in opposition to the cosmopolitan and humanist ideals of the Great Revolution.

In France, the post-revolutionary romantic movement could not influence politics; nor was it of any philosophical significance. It was primarily literary, and as such made a deep impression on modern culture. In that respect, it was inspired by the tradition of Rousseau, and on the credit of that parentage it came to be known as the romantic movement. The mystic appeal of neo-Catholicism preached by Joseph de Maistre, Maine de Biran and Chateaubriand was inherited from Rousseau; even Madame de Stael, notwithstanding her political liberalism, was a professed admirer of the prophet of irrationalism until she came under the influence of the classicist revival of German literature.

In the last analysis, the post-revolutionary romanticists of France as well as of Germany did stand under the banner of revolt against the eighteenth century raised by Rousseau, though he lived in that age when Reason, Romanticism and Revolution were harmonised to a very considerable extent. Calling themselves romanticists, the leaders of that cultural reaction denounced the "cold rationalism and pagan immorality" of the men of the Renaissance. They turned their eyes admiringly to the grandeur of the Gothic art, praised the vigour of the early Germanic culture (forgetting that it was also pagan) and recommended return to mediaeval Christian piety

and the ways of chivalrous nobility. Some of them, particularly in Britain, found in the Renaissance art and literature a revolt of human will against the tyranny of reason; they interpreted it as the first outburst of the creativeness of man (romanticism) as against "classical immobility".

Rousseau's was a revolt against the tradition of the Renaissance; it was an attempt to set the clock of history back. It failed in France; her intellectual life, profoundly influenced by a whole succession of rationalist and secular thinkers, from Descartes to Diderot, could be affected by mysticism and religious revivalism only superficially. In Germany, the post-revolutionary romanticism was not a revolt against the eighteenth century because even in that age of enlightenment a mediaeval social and intellectual atmosphere lingered there;¹ it was therefore a resistance to the penetration of the spirit of the eighteenth century; as such, it succeeded and influenced subsequent history.

The revolt against the so-called tyranny of reason was a negation of the fact that man is essentially a rational being. Ever since the intellectual Renaissance of the twelfth century, the emphasis on that fact, which could as yet be stated only as a philosophical proposition, had furnished the impetus to man's continuous struggle for spiritual freedom, for liberation from the fetters of religious faith buttressed by fantasies, fables, superstitions and prejudices, all born of the bliss of ignorance of the primitive man. It was a revolt not only against the eighteenth century, but also of the very idea of progress, a denial of the possibility of human perfectability. Romanticism was a misnomer for such a spirit, the idea of progress and belief in human perfectability being the most characteristic feature of what is called the romantic view of life. It was a revolt against the tradition of rationalism, not only of the eighteenth century; going further backward, beyond the classicism of the seventeenth century, it rejected even the tradition of scholastic theology which had operated as the solvent of the religious mode of thought; as a matter of fact, it went further backward beyond the classicism of the seventeenth century. Relapsing headlong into the fundamentalist Christian faith, the so-called romanticists of the post-revolutionary years preached a neo-Catholicism which called for a revision even of the Thomist theology. "Among the French authors of the beginning of the century, there were three prominent names—Joseph de Maistre, de Bonald, Lamennais—

all of whom represented not only a negative reaction against the principles of 1789, but a positive return to those of the Middle-Ages. They disputed the assumptions of the eighteenth century, showed that they logically led to skepticism, and invoked, against that desolating void, the dogma of Divine Revelation."²

"The temper of the romantics is best studied in fiction. They liked what was strange: ghosts, ancient decayed castles, the last melancholy descendants of once great families, practitioners of mesmerism and the occult sciences, falling tyrants and Levantine pirates. In the main, the Middle-Ages, and what was most mediaeval in the present, pleased the romantics. Very often, they cut loose from actually, either past or present, altogether."³

Royer-Collard and Guizot were the most important political thinkers of the time. Both belonged to the Girondist tradition and were admirers of the British constitutional pattern. Yet there was a great difference between the two: Guizot was a secular thinker, a great historian, a true liberal; whereas Royer-Collard, though not counted among the romanticists, fully shared their religious revivalism, being an ardent advocate of philosophical and cultural reaction. Professor of philosophy in the Paris University after the Restoration, Royer-Collard had lived through the revolution. He was a member of the Convention. The Jacobins having captured power, he managed to escape the Guillotine through flight. In 1797, he reappeared in public life as a member of Napoleon's Council of the Five-Hundred to advocate "restoration of the moral order reinstated on its ancient foundations, the final and absolute abolition of the revolutionary monster."

Politically and socially, the revolution could not be undone. Napoleon consolidated it; and but also Louis XVIII endorsed the accomplished fact as the price of restoration. The new Constitution attempted a compromise between the revolution and the ghost of a monarchy whose social basis had been completely blased, and which had irrevocably forfeited its moral sanction derived from the antiquated religious view of life. The reaction, therefore, demanded restoration of religion.

The demand was formulated by Royer-Collard, nearly twenty years before the monarchist restoration, in a memorable speech in the Council of the Five Hundred he said: "The Catholic religion rallies under its ancient banner seven-tenths of all Frenchmen. It survived the monarchy whose birth it preceded. This religion is

the basis of the popular moral order; it gives sanction to the tasks which bind citizens together and to the State. The most imperative need of the people is a belief in their ability to visualise the future, to place their hopes and fears beyond the limitations of the physical world and human life." Therefore, as a teacher of philosophy, Royer-Collard combatted the "philosophic bagatelle" of Locke's sensationalism. He invoked the authority of Pascal and was evidently influenced by Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*. The post-revolutionary romanticism professed by a passionate defender of individual liberty. It falsified itself by demanding at the same time that society must be founded on the religious view of life which did not allow man to be ever free as man. Therefore, Royer-Collard argued that there was nothing to choose between absolute monarchy and absolute democracy; he advocated "authoritative democracy", and visualised the corporate State. In addition to his rank reactionary philosophical views, Royer-Collard incorporated all the fallacies and contradictions of conventional liberalism which brought it to grief.

It was under his influence that a fellow liberal, Benjamin Constant, was not admitted to the Academy. Consistent in his liberalism, the constant advocated unrestricted individual liberty, and logically came very near to anarchism. Having rejected Rousseau's doctrine of complete alienation of individual right; Constant argued: "By liberty I understand the triumph of individuality, as much over authority which would rule by despotism as over the masses who claim the right to subject the minority to the majority. There is a part of the human being which of necessity remains individual and independent. Society becomes a usurper when it transgresses this frontier, and the majority becomes a rebel. When authority commits such acts, it does not matter much from which source... they emanate, whether it called itself an individual or a nation." That is romanticism, and it was not to be tolerated in the high academic circles dominated by the spirit of revolt against the eighteenth century. This one fact alone reveals the reactionary nature of that revolt against the "tyranny of reason".

Madame de Stael was the most distinguished and characteristic product of the period of *sensibilité*, "the singular fashion of ultra-sentiment which required that both men and women should be always palpitating with excitement, steeped in melancholy or dissolved in tears."⁴ That is to say, she was a typically romantic per-

sonality. Necker's daughter, she naturally sympathised with the Girondists, and held that the events of 1791 ran counter to the aim of the profound social transformation heralded by the philosophical revolution of the eighteenth century. But she was equally critical of the Ultra-Montanes who, after the fall of Napoleon, claimed to have inherited the tradition of the revolution of 1789. Referring to the revivalism of Royer-Collard and the mediaevalism of the romanticists, Madame de Stael wrote sarcastically: "It would be interesting to know to which generation of our forefathers infallibility had been granted."⁵ Nevertheless, as the most representative believer in the cult of sensibilité, Madame de Stael in her youth was a fervent admirer of the eighteenth century prophet of that cult. Her literary fame commenced with her *Letters on Rousseau*, published in 1788. In a maturer age, experience having sobered down her youthful enthusiasm, she became an eloquent champion of liberalism. But an incorrigible romanticist of the school of Rousseau, she could never completely outgrow the influence of the master. Through her celebrated book on Germany, a literary creation of great merit, she made German romanticism known to post-revolutionary France, and herself became an admirer of German nationalism which, with the mystic dogma of Volksgeist, rose to resist the scientific cosmopolitan and humanist spirit of the eighteenth century French culture and the political ideas and social ideals of the Great Revolution. The analogy between the concepts of Volksgeist and the General Will is obvious. Madame de Stael was quick to perceive the similarity. The romantic spirit of Rousseau was conquering Germany, even if it had failed in its homeland. A masterpiece of literary art, Madame de Stael's book on Germany is a crazy-quilt of romanticism, liberalism and nationalism. "Here perhaps we see the beginnings of the far-reaching and ill-fated alliance of liberal political thought with nationalism."⁶

Joseph de Maistre was a life-long enemy of the "philosophism" of the eighteenth century and held that neither reason nor will was the foundation of human action; it was emotion, sentiment and above all prejudice.⁷ He maintained that governments must be absolute and unlimited; and that obedience was the first of political virtue. "No government without sovereignty, no sovereignty without infallibility, and this last privilege is so essential that its existence must be assumed even in temporal sovereignty."⁸ He pleaded for the restoration of the absolutism of the Pope to whom

all temporal authority also must be subordinated, and denounced "the conspiracy of the temporal authority for despoiling the Holy See of its legitimate rights". In his opinion, all authority is ultimately of divine origin, and the Pope's power, therefore, is beyond private judgment.

"The Ultra-Montanists or Theocratists were denouncing the ages of private judgment; and were urging that authority should be re-established, and that society should be built up anew on the basis on which it had rested previous to the Renaissance and the Reformation."⁹

De Maistre was ably backed up by his pupil, Louis de Bonald. An out-and-out advocate of feudal restoration, de Bonald held that family, church and State were inter-allied institutions, all governed by the divine law of nature, which is universal and immutable, and as such the only source of authority. With this view, one could not possibly tolerate any human attempt at innovation. De Bonald, therefore, was a fierce critic of the Declaration of Rights and declared that equality was incompatible with order. "Sovereignty is in God, and all power flows from God. The law is the will of God." It is remarkable that de Bonald appealed to reason even when advancing his reactionary ideas.

The philosophical reaction culminated in the eclecticism of Victor Cousin, who claimed to have combined sensationalism, idealism, scepticism and mysticism in one system. The intolerance of Royer-Collard and the dogmatism of the Ultra-Montanists were but passing fits of intellectual insanity. The Enlightenment was a landmark in the spiritual evolution of the European humanity; to eradicate its influence was no more possible than to undo the social and political consequences of the revolution. The increase of scientific knowledge during the earlier decades of the nineteenth century cast doubt on some of the assumptions of the materialist philosophy.

It was maintained by the neo-vitalists that life was an elementary category which could not be analysed to the components of dead matter. On that doubtful scientific foundation, post-revolutionary romanticism reared the theory that the individual was the primary reality, and that emotion was the motive power in the individual, being the manifestation of life; intelligence and reason were reduced to the status of secondary values. The mystification of life lifted man out of his biological background, and

made a mystery out of him. On the basis of that pseudo-scientific mysticism, the early nineteenth century romanticists declared that the sustaining principle in man and of his world was not reason, but faith, which was defined as, hope plus the power of hope to realise itself. How could man have the power to realise his hopes simply by virtue of the faith that it could be done? That was a mystery hidden in the heart of nature; reason may speculate, but never solve the riddle. The implication of romantic individualism was thus to deny that man could ever be the maker of his destiny; relapse into the belief in a Providence was the logical corollary.

Political uncertainties and social insecurity after the fall of Napoleon also encouraged religious atavism. "Imagination and feeling, the heart and the spirit, metaphysics and religion, made more and more emphatic claims to a satisfaction which a doctrine reducing everything to sensation and using only analyses could not give."¹⁰ Under the banner of catholic liberalism, religion threatened to break out of the bounds of orthodoxy. The romantic literature gave free reins to imagination and inflamed passions; it encouraged individualism to run amuck, challenging the morality of organised society. Finally, revolutionary idealism reasserted itself to invoke the spectre of socialism. Cousin's philosophy proposed to satisfy all and sundry—the enquiring mind, hungry heart, lonesome soul. But, the culmination of the revolt against the eighteenth century could not maintain the pose of catholicity for any length of time. Its spiritualist essence soon over-shadowed the apparent tolerance for other points of view.

Cousin revived the venerable notion of the Final Cause, and identified it with God. He argued that God could be conceived as the absolute substance, because absolute substance is the absolute cause. Thus, God is the creator and He creates necessarily. But Cousin disowned any agreement with Spinoza's Pantheism; nor was his absolute substance cause anything like the absolute unity of the Eleatics. His God was almost an anthropomorphic conception. At any rate, it was a conception of such an all-pervasive, all-mighty, all-consuming transcendental entity as left no room for anything real in the physical world of human experience.

Religion could not be restored by the old-fashioned arguments of Royer-Collard and de Maistre. Philosophy must be harnessed for the purpose. Cousin's philosophy tried to resurrect the discredited notion of God so as to reduce man to a marionette—to

sheer nothingness. At the same time, the pseudo-philosophy of scientific spiritualism could provide the divine sanction to the dictatorship of any man having the ambition to feel himself godlike. Simultaneously, with his age-long struggle for freedom, the incentive for which is a biological urge, man, in so far as he is a victim of his vanity, has all along been haunted by the fear of freedom. This contradiction between a basic biological impulse and the super-structure of a predisposition of primitive human psychology underlies the whole history of mankind and explains the dialectics of spiritual evolution.

Felicité de Lamennais, having been for years an associate of de Maistre and de Bonald, broke away from the Ultra-Montanes to found liberal Catholicism. He drew upon the tradition of the clerics who, in the critical days of 1789, had turned against the old order to join the revolution. Intellectual reaction, which appealed to the authority of religion, was isolated when Catholicism reconciled itself with the revolution. Religion itself was revolutionised; popular Christianity or liberal Catholicism was a revolutionised religion.

Religion is a mental habit cultivated for ages; it cannot be discarded all on a sudden. Cultural and ethical values had been traditionally associated with it. It takes time to remove the doubt about their secular sanction. Meanwhile, the legitimate fear of a cultural chaos and moral nihilism creates a widespread reluctance to break away from the time-honoured moorings of religion. In that unavoidable period of transition, faith is progressively attenuated, religion, a matter of innocent prejudice rather than of an intelligent conviction. The natural religion of the eighteenth century represented this tendency. But it was highly intellectualised and also romanticised. It could do for poets and professors. In the transition stage of spiritual progress, the common people needed the security and solace of religion in a simpler form; in other words, revolution, to be abiding, must democratise religion also.

Under the banner of popular Christianity of liberal Catholicism, the Great Revolution touched the soul of the people. It still needed the guidance of the Church; but the temple of God also must be democratised. Lamennais called upon the parish priests to throw off the yoke of the Pope and his hierarchy, if they wanted to be the defenders of a popular faith.¹¹

Lamennais preached a religion very much similar to the original

Christian Gospel, full of moral fervour and democratic will. "In the scales of eternal justice, your will weighs heavier than the will of kings; for it is the people, who make the kings; and kings are made for the people, and not the people for the kings. The Heavenly Father has not made the limbs of his children in order that they might be broken by chains, nor their soul that it might be bruised by slavery."¹²

Encouraged by the popular response to the dictum that "the law of liberty is also the law of God", Lamennais elaborated his social philosophy in a new book. "When you have succeeded in making the foundation of political organisation the Christian equality of rights, the resurrection which you desire, and which God commands you to desire, will be fulfilled of itself in the three inseparable branches: the material, the intellectual and the moral order."¹³ His description of the moral order, and of the evils standing on the way, places him amongst the pioneers of Christian socialism. He walked in the footsteps of Mably and Morelly. In him was resurrected the romantic spirit of the utopians of the late seventeenth century, to be inherited by Enfantine, St. Simon and Fourier.

Lamennais was excommunicated and unfrocked; he died in defiance, thrown out of the Church, declining her sacraments. He thus personified the process of the prejudice of religion withering away after its psychological foundation had been undermined by the advancement of knowledge, and its historical sanction challenged by experience.

Abbe Lacordaire and Montalembert were associated with Lamennais in the movement for a "new spiritualisation of the catholic faith" and separation of the Church from politics. Montalembert was a member of the Upper House under the July Monarchy. The following is a specimen of the powerful speeches he frequently delivered in that atmosphere of reaction:

"Catholics are unequal to their foes because they have not really accepted the Great Revolution out of which the new society was born, the modern life of people. They are still afraid of it. Many of them still belong to the *ancien regime*, to a system that admitted neither civic equality nor political freedom nor freedom of conscience. But that *ancien regime* is dead and will never come to life again at any time or anywhere. The new society, democracy, will expand in conformity with its principles. Truly, the Church can

venture, without fear or distrust, on that vast ocean of democracy. There was nothing in the old order which Catholicism has any reason to regret, nothing in the new it has any reason to dread."

Chateaubriand is recognised as the leader of the post-revolutionary romantic movement in France, which is said to have died with Victor Hugo. Lamartine was the other most outstanding figure of the movement. But excepting literary style, there was little common to the three men. Such indiscriminate grouping has created a good deal of confusion about the romantic view of life. The romanticism represented by Chateaubriand "can be defined as comprising of those Europeans whose birth falls between 1770 to 1815, and who achieved distinction in philosophy, statecraft and the arts during the first half of the nineteenth century."¹⁴ According to this view, not only prosaic constitutionalist and conservative adherents of Whig liberalism, but rank reactionaries can be classified as romanticists. As a matter of fact, judged by the standard of Hugo, Lamartine and even Madame de Stael, Chateaubriand can hardly be called a romanticist. The claim to the distinction of a Christian reformer like Lamennais is greater. On the other hand, men who made their mark outside the field of belles lettres, such as Michelet and the socialist pioneers, truly represented the romantic view of life. The error is to regard romanticism only as a tendency in literature and the arts. A particular view of life finds expression in all the departments of human activity. However, it is a fact that in the nineteenth century romanticism was associated, deliberately or out of sheer unthinking exuberance of idealism, with cultural reaction, and Chateaubriand represented that type of passionate idealism for a wrong cause. He was a rebel against the eighteenth century.

In contrast, Hugo and Lamartine, not to mention lesser lights, had their eyes fixed on a future order of equality and justice, which was to be reared upon the ruins of the old, discredited morally and intellectually by the Enlightenment, and pulled down by the revolution, politically and socially. "The critical philosopher of the eighteenth century destroyed his own dwelling place. The new generation must build or perish. Whence we conclude that romanticism is first of all constructive; it may be called a solving epoch as against the dissolving eighteenth century."¹⁵

True romanticism, as represented by Hugo, Lamartine, Michelet and others, who boldly looked into the future rather than

bemoan the passing of the older order and glorify the past, was also critical of the limitations of classical rationalism. The whole truth of human existence had not been discovered in the eighteenth century. The trail had been blazed; it must be followed up. New knowledge and greater experience had raised unforeseen problems which called for greater human endeavour. Mankind could not for ever live in the eighteenth century; it must go ahead and build new houses, which will again become way side stations. Realisation of the limitations and inadequacies of the high water mark reached in the eighteenth century was not revolt against it; there was no desire to turn the tide back on the ground that its surface water was murky. But in Chateaubriand, romantic literature served the cause of reaction.

Philosophically, he was a follower of Rousseau, and as such could not be an uncompromising enemy of the revolution. In his first book, *Essai Historique, Politique et Morale sur la Revolution*, he tried to reconcile his royalism with revolutionary ideas. As regards religion, he was a free-thinker. *La Genie du Christianisme*, published in 1802, the year Catholicism was re-established by Napoleon, made Chateaubriand famous overnight. Worthless as a work of scholarship, the book found an extremely receptive psychological atmosphere. The bold ideas and fascinating ideals of the philosophers which had brought about the revolution did not bring the heaven on earth. Despotism and poverty remained. There was a general sense of disillusionment. In such a psychological atmosphere, the average human being seeks solace and security in religion. In the newly published book, which commanded immediate recognition as a masterpiece of literary art, disappointed and bewildered French men and women read "that of all religions that have ever existed the Christian religion is the most poetic, the most human, the most compatible with freedom, art and literature; that the modern world owes it everything; that there is nothing more divine than its teaching, nothing more lovable and dignified than its principles, doctrine and cult; that it favours genius, purifies the senses, develops pious emotions, gives vitality to thought, a noble style to the writer and a perfect form of the artist."

The moving style was reminiscent of Rousseau, and to readers overwhelmed by its beauty, the sentiments sounded also very much like those of the Vicar of Savoy. The French men and women loyal to the tradition of the cult of sensibilité were deeply

impressed by the passionate eloquence of the new prophet of the old cult, without realising that they were being incited to revolt against the eighteenth century. The result was that, according to competent historians of literature. Chateaubriand's *La Genie du Christianisme* influenced the French mind perhaps more profoundly than Pascal's *Pensees*.¹⁶ The more correct judgment, however, should be that it made a stronger appeal to sentimentality.

The Rousseauesque romanticism of Chateaubriand finds its fullest expression in *Rene*, the most characteristic of his literary productions, in which the miseries of a morbid soul are depicted in the minutest detail on the model of the Confessions. It was the picture of lost souls tormented by the conflict of loyalties, who were moved by the utopia of Chateaubriand's Christianity. His popularity as a political prophet was won by another hit of luck—the accident of his pamphlet against Napoleon (*De Bonaparte, des Bourbons et de la Necessite de se Rallier a Nos Princes Legitimes*), appearing on the very day the Allied armies entered Paris. It was royalist propaganda, a plea for the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty, which was described as legitimate. Just as *La Genie du Christianisme* had helped Napoleon to re-establish Catholicism, this pamphlet similarly popularised the Restoration, so much so that Louis XVIII is reported to have said that it was worth more than one hundred thousand soldiers.

A certain section of the people of France had got accustomed to being moved by anything from the pen of the greater master of style. In gratitude, the restored Bourbon king made Chateaubriand his Foreign Minister. Nevertheless, he died a frustrated and disillusioned man, consoled only by his own conceit. He succeeded in gaining a place of well-deserved honour in the annals of literature; but he failed as the prophet of the reactionary romanticism which pitted irrationalism, intuition, imagination and fantasy against rational thinking, positive knowledge and man's desire to be the master of his destiny. While his other works commemorate a literary genius, the *Memoires* show up the man, vain but disillusioned. He lamented in an embittered eloquence that the old European order, that is, mediaevalism, was in the throes of death, and that the final triumph of the new forces of democracy and republicanism was inevitable. Yet, he was conceited enough to warn the irresistible democratic age not to forget "the truth that property is hereditary and inalienable, property is nothing but lib-

erty. Absolute equality, which presupposes complete submission to such equality, will produce the hardest slavery."

And what was the alternative to the sinful ways of errant democracy? "I can find no solution for the future except through Christianity, and catholic Christianity." The hero of reactionary romanticism died with his boots on. But having experienced the Enlightenment and the Great Revolution, France would not emulate him, although it did him the honour he fully merited. Yet, prejudice dies so very hard that even in twentieth century France there are people who read him. But that curious fact is rather a tribute to the tradition of appreciating good literature irrespective of the purpose with which it is produced, and that is the tradition of the classicist culture of the Age of Reason.

The stirring voice of true romanticism, heralded by Lamennais, was raised by Lamartine. Like Chateaubriand, he also won his laurels in the field of belles lettres. His *Harmonies* ranks with *La Génie du Christianisme* and Victor Hugo's *Legendes des Siècles*, as one of the three highlights of French romantic literature. In Lamartine, romanticism became the passionate poetry to sing the glory of man. With the decline of the July Monarchy, the intellectual revolt against the philosophy of revolution was getting exhausted. There was a recrudescence of revolutionary idealism. Intellectual respectability and academic honours were no longer conditional upon the fashion of tracing the cause of the reign of terror and other extravagances of the revolution to the scientific naturalism of the eighteenth century and its rationalist tradition. It naturally took France several decades to absorb the shock which set a whole continent ablaze. That period of dismay and the consequent emotional unsettlement over, intellectual equilibrium was restored. The time came for recollecting events dispassionately and appraising their significance objectively and historically. The sober accounts of academic historians like Thiers and Mignet present the Jacobin regime no longer only in the lurid light of cruelty, violence and bloodshed. The purely historical work, thus begun, was carried on masterfully by Michelet, seconded by Louis Blanc and others. Lamartine dramatised the rehabilitated history of the revolution. Love of truth did not allow denial or exoneration of unnecessary cruelties and other senseless extravagances; but, romantically, Lamartine regarded them as ordained by an uncontrollable fate rather than as deliberate crimes. He described the revolution as

the modern Hercules who cast down despots, to attain the ultimate victory of a regenerate all-embracing humanity. His famous poem, *Jocelyn*, was an ode to cosmopolitan Humanism, which was to be established by the revolution of 1848. He wrote history also in a poetic language, more full of confidence and enthusiasm than critical analysis of facts and events. "It is said everywhere that this fans the hard fires of revolution, and that this will give the people experience for the revolutions to come. May God so desire."¹⁷ The book concludes with a typically romantic outburst. "We are proud to belong to a race which has been permitted by Providence to conceive such thoughts, and to be the offspring of an age which has impressed such a movement of ideas on the human mind. Glory to France for her intelligence her destiny, her soul, her blood. A nation need not regret her blood when it has flowed for the blossoming of eternal truths. Ideas spring from human blood. Revolutions descend from the scaffold. The divinity of every religion is attested by its martyrs—dead for the cause of the future and labourer in the field of humanity."

His rhetorical oratory and the powerful spell of his poetic appeal having helped the rise of the Second Republic, Lamartine exclaimed: "The new Republic, pure, holy, immortal, popular and transcendent, expedient and great, has been founded." As the Foreign Minister of the Second Republic, he issued a manifesto to the European Powers. That memorable document shows how one could be a romanticist with soaring imagination, deep feelings, strong emotions and even with a fervent faith in God of Justice and Righteousness, and yet not an irrational revivalist. "War is not a principle of the French Republic, though it was a glorious necessity for her future in 1792. Between 1792 and 1848, there is a half a century. To come back after half a century, to the principles of 1792 or to the principles of conquest of the Empire would be to regress and not to advance. The revolution of yesterday was a step in advance and not backwards. The world and we want to go forward to brotherhood and peace."

The youngest and the last of them, Victor Hugo, was the greatest of the nineteenth century French romanticists. Renowned primarily as a man of letters—poet, novelist, dramatist—he did not try to live in the ivory tower of romanticism, only concerned either with the dreamland of imagination or pining for the legendary Golden Age of Christian mediaevalism. He did not conjure out

of poetic fantasy the ideal man, whether of a venerable past or of a virtuous future. His poetic genius penetrated the core of the realities of actual life and he dramatised the experiences of the man of flesh and blood—his miseries, his follies his joys and his ambitions. If Hugo was the last of the romanticists, he was also the first of the realists, and in that role, one of the greatest also. In him, romantic literature reached the highwater mark. Intuition, imagination and passion were supplemented by an analytical power, intelligent comprehension and rational will.

Born after the first fury of the revolution had blown over, Hugo entertained no strong feeling for or against that world-shaking event. Owing to his parentage, he grew up a royalist and Catholic. His first poem was motivated by those sentiments. Until the rise of the Second Republic, Hugo did not hold any pronounced political views, the automatic royalism of his youth having faded away from a life flooded with the dazzling light of an unprecedented literary fame. In 1848, Hugo's enchanted pen and authoritative voice publicly championed the cause of democracy. As a member of the Legislative Assembly of the Second Republic, he made speeches passionately denouncing social injustice and eloquently advocating reforms. It became evident that the greatest lyric poet of the age had not been living in the rarefied atmosphere of pure art, untouched by the ugly artifices of actual life. He was consciously in tune with the realities of the social environments in which he lived, and fully sympathised with the sorrows and sufferings, joys and aspirations of his fellow-men.

Socialism had already appeared as a political creed to distrust and deprecate democracy even before it was given a fair trial. On the new issue, Hugo spoke soberly, so very unnatural for a romanticist. He was sceptical, neither a rabid reactionary, nor a fire-eating revolutionary. "At the basis of Socialism, there are some of the sorrowful realities of our time and of all times." Who could know that better than the author of *Les Misérables* and *Chatiment*? And who had deeper sympathy for the victims of social injustice? Yet, the romanticist Hugo was not an utopian. He was too rational to be gullible, to believe that the poor are all angels who, given a chance, would build a heaven on earth in no time. Therefore, while fully sympathising with their aspirations, he warned the socialist utopians: "There is an aspiration for a better lot in life, which is not less natural to man, but which often follows the wrong road in

looking in this world for what can only be found in the other." The reference to another world was evidently a fashion of speech. Hugo wanted to deprecate the impatient enthusiasm which believed that the world could be remade overnight. "This attitude inspired by our revolutions, which valued and placed human dignity and the sovereignty of the people so high that the man of the people suffers today with double and contradictory feelings in his misery." That clearly was an autobiographical touch. A superb poet and a great dramatist must be a keen psychologist. As such, Hugo generalised his own experience. And has not the history of the age of the masses borne him out? How many ardent champions of the cause of the people have been martyrs of their sense and sensibility? Revolution not only consumes her children; she is a patricide also. Faith in man's innate rationality and the resulting sense of justice enabled the humanist poet to find a way out of the dilemma of the man of the people who recoiled from the fanaticism of the knight-errant. "You have made laws against anarchy. Now you make some laws against misfortune!"

Les Legendes des Siecles has been celebrated as the greatest book of the century; in it romantic literature reached its zenith. The whole panorama of human history, from the genesis of the race to a distant future, is visualised vividly in poetic imagination. The unfolding of the majestic drama is seen in the dream of the Mother of Mankind—Eve in the Garden of Eden. The concept of absolute righteousness is the leitmotif of the drama. The grand finale is the attainment of equality.

In *L'Homme Qui Rit*, one breathes the true romantic spirit. The theme is human heroism. Confronted with the super-human tyranny of blind and unpredictable chance, it is overwhelmed, defeated, but not broken nor vanquished. In *Actes et Paroles*, Hugo appeals to "the conscience and intelligence" of man, thus belying the conventional notion that romanticism is an elemental surge of blind passion—an appeal to irrationalism.

Even when he outgrew his inherited Catholicism, Hugo did not become irreligious. He searched for a religion consistent with Humanism. *Religion et Religion* is an anguished cry for a pure faith and a curious protest against creeds and dogmas which deform and debase the notion of God, debauch and defile His name. Towards the end of his life, Hugo wrote *Le Pape*, in which the spirit of Christ appears to appeal against the spirit of Christianity; and

the ideal Christian is opposed to the self-appointed Vicar of Rome. *L'Ane* is a confession of faith, so to say. Ridicule of the follies of the learned ignorance of the past, that is, of mediaeval scholastic learning, is followed by a passionate declaration of the confidence in the wisdom of the free and enlightened man of the future.

Hugo's novels, like *Chatiment*, *Les Misérables* and *Notre Dame*, are descriptive treatises on sociology, written in a poetic language, and therefore all the more telling. Man and his conditions, his past, present and future, his experiences and expectations, his virtues and vices achievements and potentialities, and also his weakness—these are the material which by the master touch of Hugo were transformed into immortal works of literary art. He was a Humanist. With him, romanticism regained its soul.

The humanist soul of romanticism spoke even more majestically through Michelet. Though one of the greatest literary historians, he does not belong to the tradition of the romantic men of letters of the nineteenth century. With him, literature became a means for dramatising history; he wrote history not as a mere chronicle of events, but as a vivid account of man's struggle for freedom through the ages. And history written like that necessarily becomes part of the literary art and proves that it is made by man. The abstraction of Vico's *New Science*, humanised by the romanticism of Michelet, becomes art. The founder of German romanticism has contributed to that process considerably. Through Michelet, post-revolutionary French romanticism feels the impact of the romantic movement in Germany.

Michelet was a man of the people, fully sharing the attitude inspired by the revolution, the psychological basis of which attitude was revealed by Hugo; but the contradiction of that attitude could not kill Michelet's soul. As a sensitive man, he did experience the misery which is caused by the recognition of the painful fact of man's weakness and wickedness, and that the great men of history, the heroes of the revolution, are often not above human failings. But the misery could not overwhelm the confidence in the possibility of human regeneration, and the enthusiasm to work for that noble humanist ideal.

Michelet gave a larger, almost a metaphysical, connotation to Humanism, thereby raising it far above the level of the subjectivist individualism—the common feature of the humanist and romanticist view of life. He conceived humanity not as a conglom-

meration of individual human beings, not as a "concrete universal", but as an abstraction from empirical facts, and held that humanity was greater than the great men of history.¹⁸ This romanticist conception enabled Michelet not to be depressed by the failings of the heroes of history. He used the term "*tout le monde*" to express the abstract conception of humanity, which appears in his writings as a person; but he did not idealise the abstraction. It was a democratic concept.¹⁹ The conception of humanity personified in abstraction is the maker of history.

With Michelet, not only does history to be a composite biography of heroes and great men, the tradition of the Great Revolution becomes the inspiration of the socialist movement. But he was not a socialist, no more than Hugo. He took a much broader view of revolution: It was to free society as a whole from slavery and tyranny of any kind. The united French nation must be based upon a free proletariat and a free peasantry. But it will be democratic by embracing all as equals in common freedom. "Are not shopkeepers, merchants, civil servants, rich people, all of them the slaves of a relentless social system, the tyranny of which has to be broken down as a preliminary condition to that reconciliation of all classes on which the future of the country ultimately depends."²⁰ Michelet was evidently attacking the time-honoured spiritual slavery which had recaptured the upper classes in the post-revolutionary period, and also the tyranny of the intellectuals who tried to bolster up the reaction by preaching a philosophy of revivalism and producing a literature which glorified irrationalism and placed heart above head. By attacking spiritual slavery and tyranny of the debauched and prostituted intellectualism, Michelet held up the banner of the philosophical revolution which had been brought about by the Enlightenment.²¹

Michelet and Lamennais before him represented the resurgence of revolutionary passions; Hugo also, though not always consciously. Their having captured the intellectual leadership of France, the short interlude of spiritual reaction, served very effectively by the so-called romantic literature, was over. One achievement, however, was made during the interlude: the romantic literature celebrated the emergence of the individual as a historical force—the individual conscious of himself and his importance. Therefore, the romantic literature, not only of Lamartine and Hugo, but also even of Chateaubriand, enriched the culture of the eighteenth century instead of being its antithesis.

NOTES

1. "Just as in France in the eighteenth century, so in Germany in the nineteenth century, revolutionary philosophic conceptions introduced a breaking up of existing political conditions. But how different the two appear! The French were engaged in open fight with all recognised science, with (against) the Church, frequently also with (against) the State, their writings were published beyond the frontiers in Holland or in England, and they themselves were frequently imprisoned in the Bastille. The Germans, on the contrary, were professors, appointed instructors of youth by the State, their writings recognised text books and their definite system of universal progress, the Hegelian, raised, as it were, to the rank of a royal Prussian philosophy of government." Frederick Engels, *Feuerbach—The Roots of Socialist Philosophy*.
2. G. Lowes Dickinson, *Revolution and Reaction in Modern France*. Lamennais cannot be legitimately included in the list.
3. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*.
4. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 13th Edition.
5. *Considerations sur les Evenements de la Revolution Francaise*.
6. J.P. Mayer, *Political Thought in France From Sieyes to Sorel*.
7. *Essais Sur le Principe Generateur de Constitutions Politiques*.
8. De Maister, *Du Pape*.
9. Flint, *History of the Philosophy of History*.
10. Ibid.
11. *Progress et Revolution*.
12. Lamennais, *Paroles d'un Crloyant*.
13. *Livre du Peuple*.
14. Jacques Barzun, *Romanticism and the Modern Ego*.
15. Ibid.
16. Victor Giraud, *Le Christianisme de Chateaubriand*.
17. *L' Histoire des Girondins*.
18. Other outstanding political thinkers of the time shared the view. Pierre Laroux, for instance, declared : "Humanity is an ideal being, composed of a multitude of real beings, who are themselves humanity in the germ, humanity in the seminal condition."
19. "He is speaking ostensibly of *tout le monde*, that is to say, of everyone in general, and no one in particular—but it is plain from his words that he has in his mind the mass of men as opposed to a minority of genius or culture." Lowes Dickinson, *Revolution and Reaction in Modern France*.
20. Jules Michelet, *Le Peuple*.

21. "The skeptical and atheistical views which had been current in the eighteenth century were, of course, widely held during the period of the empire, but they were not allowed expression and only found vent after the Restoration, when clerical and political reactionaries stirred up slumbering revolutionary passions." Flint, *History of the Philosophy of History*.

Chapter XIII

HISTORY OF ROMANTICISM

As an instrument of reaction, romanticism played a much bigger role and exercised a more far-reaching influence in the history of modern Germany. There it assumed a philosophical character and determined political theories as well as practice. Before proceeding to examine the significance of romanticism in Germany, it is necessary to define the term.

Romanticism has been defined in a variety of ways. The confusion and error about its place in the history of thought and also in life results from the vagueness about its meaning. Originally, it was a tendency in art; but the theory of art indicates an attitude to life, and life is a part of nature. Therefore, from the very beginning, romanticism was a way of life and as such had a philosophical significance, even if that was not clearly formulated and stated until a later period. There cannot be a culture without a philosophy. The men of the Renaissance, particularly those who represented its artistic and literary aspects, were the first to take a romantic view of life. Historically, romanticism is a form of the revolt of man against the tyranny of the super-natural. Philosophically and culturally, romanticism is identical with humanism. It is the faith in the sovereignty of man and in his unlimited creativeness. The cardinal principle of romanticism is that man makes history—he is the maker of his own destiny. Therefore, if the eighteenth century was the Age of Reason, it was also the Age of Romanticism. The rationalism of the eighteenth century placed man in the centre of the Universe, without denying that ultimately he is bound by the laws of nature; but it maintained, on the authority of scientific knowledge, that potentially man was capable of acquiring the mastery of nature progressively. That is also the sober philosophical statement of the romantic view of life. It proclaims the sovereignty of human creativeness, but at the same time is not

blind to the actual limitations of man's power, the limitations being natural, since man is only a part of nature. This view of romanticism was expressed by Goethe in the classical sentence: "*In der Beschraenkung zeigt sich erst der Meister.*" A belaboured English rendering will be: "The master man reveals himself under limitations."

Development of science is so far the greatest romance of human history. It began as the romantic adventure of man for conquering nature by penetrating her secrets. At the same time, scientific knowledge is rational; science, therefore, is the synthesis of rationalism and romanticism. It broke away from classical rationalism, which by implication denied the sovereignty of the creativeness of man. Romanticism repudiates metaphysical generalisations and insists upon concrete realities, man being one of them; so does science. Romanticism was not a revolt against reason, but against the neo-classicism of the seventeenth century, which put a secular teleology out of rationalism. Religion being the earliest expression of human rationality. It put instinctive belief in order, and remained inherent in classical rationalism even of Descartes and Spinoza, which started from the theological concept of a law-governed Universe. The scientific naturalism of the eighteenth century, notwithstanding the fact that it was anchored in the reason of man, was also a revolt against the essentially teleological classic rationalism. Not only de la Mettrie suggested, "let us follow the direction of experience and not trouble our head about the vain history of philosophers," but also the arch-rationalist Voltaire exclaimed: 'Oh Plato; so much admired! You have only narrated fables.' The revolt against the eighteenth century, therefore, was fighting a bogey. Sheer rationalism, spinning a cobweb of morbid fantasy, mysticism, religious revivalism and sloppy sentimentality, is not romanticism. Revolution is a romantic adventure. The post-revolutionary romanticism was a passionate cry for the restoration of the ancient regime. At best it was a feeble echo of neo-classicism.

Etymologically, derived from the word romance, romanticism is the glorification of what is conventionally believed to be unreal. Hegel identified the real with the rational; therefore, since his time, romanticism has come to be interpreted as irrationalism and anti-realism. If any established order is granted the sanction of rationality, on the ground that the real (existing) is the rational, then the

romantic view of life is certainly unrealistic and irrational. Therefore, the German romanticist Karl Maria von Weber protested: "Life is thus, but thus I will not have it. Standing on the intolerable reality, I recreate." The realities of any given situation place restrictions on man's creativity; but at the same time, man is capable of overcoming those restrictions and create new realities. That is the essence of the romantic view of life.

Romanticism, however, has an older history. Ever since the Renaissance, it was the lever of European culture. Even the classically rationalist age of Corneille, Racine, Moliere, Boileau, believed in human perfectibility, while taking a sceptical attitude towards all other beliefs. And belief in human perfectibility without any divine grace is an important feature of the romantic view of life. Pascal's mysticism also did not belittle the decisive importance of man's consciousness, of his significance in the cosmic scheme. "What is man? A nothing with respect to the infinite, a whole with respect to nothingness, a midpoint between all things and none." This sounds mystic. But then follows: "Our whole dignity consists in thinking. Thinking makes man. Man is but a reed, the weakest in nature; but he is a thinking reed. The Universe need not take arms to crush him; a whiff of air, a drop of water suffices to destroy him. But even though the Universe destroys him, man is still nobler than that which kills him, for he knows that he is being called."¹

Pascal, as a great mathematician could not really be a prophet of irrationalism, as he has been depicted by some historians of culture as far back as 1690. Echoing Pascal, Perrault wrote: "The human race must be considered as an eternal man so that the life of humanity has had, like the life of a man, its infancy and youth; is at present in its maturity and will know no decline."²

Fontanelle also had an unshakable faith in the future of mankind. "This man, who has lived from the beginning of the world to the present time, will have no old age; he will be always as capable as ever of doing the things for which he was fitted in youth, and he will be more and more able to accomplish those which are appropriate to his manhood; in other words and to drop allegory, man will never degenerate."

Abbe de St. Pierre was a still more enthusiastic believer in human perfectibility and historical progress. "His ardent faith in them led him to devise a multitude of schemes for individual and social

improvement, which seemed to most of his contemporaries mere dreams, but which were rarely altogether dreams, and which, even when dreams, were of the kind that precede and cause awakening. He was a precursor of Turgot and Condorcet.¹³

Rousseau's romanticism obviously was not of that tradition. Therefore, after the revolution, it could ally itself with reaction. That false romanticism did not succeed in France, but it was rampant in Germany and partially in Britain. The older movement was for a revival of the original romanticism of the Renaissance art and literature. And inasmuch as the Renaissance itself was a revival of ancient culture and learning, its tradition was classicist as well as romanticist. The romantic revival of the seventeenth century greatly influenced aesthetic theories and literature. It rose not expressly as a revolt against rationalism, because it was partially a neo-classicist movement. It resulted from the "*Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*" described by the historians of culture as "the Thirty Years War of Literary Controversy", which concluded in the beginning of the eighteenth century. Originally, it was a theory of aesthetics developed in Italy during the seventeenth century in opposition to the neo-classicism of the French culture of the age of Louis XIV. From that original character, romantic revival came to be known conventionally as a revolt against reason. Of course, as a theory of aesthetics, it attached greater importance to personal experience, emotion and spontaneity. It was believed to be a cult of irrationalism because of its association with an intellectual atmosphere hostile to the Cartesian philosophy.

But reason was not altogether ruled out by the founders of the romantic theory of aesthetics. Gravina was a Cartesian. He welcomed Descartes' antagonism to scholastic dogmatism and his all-doubting metaphysics as spiritual liberation. He found in it no hostility to poetry. Even Vico rejected only the materialist implications of the Cartesian philosophy. But "none would have been more ready to recognise the enormous value of the Cartesian method in providing that intellectual freedom, which made his own work possible. Vico, the spiritual heir of Bruno and Campanella, would have found himself powerless to overthrow the tyranny of mediaeval scholasticism without an alliance with Descartes; he no less than Gravina must have welcomed the aid of the Great French thinker in combating the Aristotelian tradition."¹⁴

The spirit of the Renaissance having crossed the Alps, in the sev-

enteenth century Italy slipped into the backwaters of European culture. There was a marked demoralisation of art and devitalisation of literature. The Counter-Reformation had triumphed; the Vatican had regained its deadly grip on the spiritual life of Italy. The home of the Renaissance became the scene of the martyrdom of Bruno and Galileo. "The spirit of the Renaissance literature had evaporated; formulas alone remained; and the champions of these formulas devoted themselves, with a zeal which often outstripped discretion, to keep them alive by breathing an artificial life into them; they decked them out with a fantastic, often grotesque extravagance, or handled them with an ingenuity which appealed rather to the capricious fancy than to sober commonsense."⁵

The aesthetic decadence reached its climax in the so-called *Marinismo*, the craze for the poetry of Marini who, with a considerable wealth of fantasy, glorified the moral laxity, unbounded individualism, callous selfishness, lack of sense of responsibility, aristocratic snobbishness and other vices which had been unwarrantedly attributed to the men of the Renaissance, particularly of the latter period. That deplorable degeneration of literary taste brought upon Italy the ridicule of Europe, especially of France where the spirit of the Renaissance had found a magnificent expression in the most brilliant chapter of the history of modern European literature. Pere Bouhours's unkind remark that Italy was the home of bad taste started the long literary controversy out of which the neo-romantic theory of aesthetics developed in Italy.

Like all other aspects of the intellectual and cultural life of France in the seventeenth century, literary criticism was also influenced by the Cartesian philosophy. "This great thinker (Descartes) who never wrote a line on aesthetics, was virtually the creator of France's aesthetic canon."⁶ Descartes' famous dictum that the highest beauty was the highest truth did certainly become the criterion of French literary criticism in the seventeenth and the early eighteenth century. Judged by that criterion, the Marinist cult of beauty for the sake of beauty was repugnant to good taste. From the point of view of the history of the arts, the Cartesian dictum was of far-reaching significance. By linking up aesthetics with ethics, it made the former also a part of philosophy. In other words, the controversy was essentially philosophical. Italian neo-romanticism, being a protest against the Cartesian influence on ethics, was philosophically reactionary. It did not offer an improvement upon Carte-

sianism, as was subsequently done by the genuine romanticists who in the eighteenth century France broke away from Descartes' quasi scholastic rationalism, and enriched naturalism with the scientific aspect of his philosophy. As inheritors of the spirit of the revolt of man, they heralded the Great Revolution.

Humiliated by French criticism, the more sensitive amongst the Italian men of letters repudiated *Marinismo*. Some of them wrote poems celebrating virtuous love; others fed the flames with their amorous poetry; still others gave up singing in praise of love and took to writing poetry to sing the glory of Jesus. "The results of the famous controversy were not only merely a spirit of refutation of Bouhour's calumnies, but, what was more important, a serious effort to remedy the shortcomings which a comparison with French achievements had made apparent."⁷ All the Italian men of letters, stung to the quick by Bouhour's criticism, founded in 1690 the *Accademia degli Arcadia*, or simply, the Arcadia, with the object of renewing "the sweet studies and innocent customs which the ancient Arcadians cultivated". The Arcadia was the background of the romantic revival begun with the theory of aesthetics formulated in Muratori's *Della Perfetta Poesia Italiana* and Gravina's *Region Politica*.

Vico, however, was the real father of the Italian neo-romanticism; because he held that reason had no place in poetry, which was entirely a product of imagination. In Muratori's theory of aesthetics, fantasia was a handmaiden of the intellect; and Gravina was a Cartesian. The aesthetic theory of all the Italian contemporaries of Vico was "based on faulty conceptions of the mechanism of mind".⁸ Religious bias, mediaeval mentality and hostility to materialism rendered the very idea of mechanism repugnant to Vico.⁹ Reason could not be altogether excluded from philosophy in the land of Bruno, Campanella, Galileo, not to mention Machiavelli and the men of the Renaissance, who were great artists as well as scientists. Vico himself was the founder of a new science, which revealed history as an evolutionary (rational) process. Nevertheless, in aesthetics, a branch of human activity, he conceded supremacy to imagination. "The imagination is, in Vico's thought, an active, creative force; it is not merely the provider of the materials, the sumptuous images, with which, as in the Muratorian system, genius works; it is genius itself. Vico's definition of the function of the imagination as a collective force in the early stage

of human evolution, might well have formed the groundwork for a whole system of aesthetic thinking."¹⁰ To hold that intellect and imagination are mutually exclusive is erroneous. In primitive human beings, they are not differentiated; and an element of thought is always inherent in imagination, particularly creative imagination. It was a dogmatic assertion that primitive man lived only in imagination.

However, the philosophical tendency of the new Italian theory of aesthetics was on the whole anti-Cartesian, whereas in France it was decidedly under Descartes' influence. On account of that philosophical difference, the former placed intellect more and more under a discount, and came to be known as romanticism, which meant disregard for realities—a cult of irrationalism.

The controversy was finally composed by Abbe Jean-Baptiste du Bos, through whom France made the greatest contribution to the aesthetic thought of Europe in the early eighteenth century. Du Bos accepted the Italian view to a considerable extent, but he could hardly be called a romanticist. "It was one of his conspicuous merits that he pleaded earnestly for the rights of genius against the tyranny of reason; at the same time, he was not easily swayed by enthusiasm."¹¹ Philosophically, he was a Cartesian, and there is evidence that he never completely abandoned that position. Moreover, he came also under Bayle's influence and also of Locke, which made him sceptical about over-enthusiasm. His great merit was to reconcile the admiration for the classics with the new cult of emotionalism. He held that a harmonious blending of the two could be the most reliable inspiration for the creation of great aesthetic values. He was an admirer of Perault and the founder of the cult of sensibility which became so very fashionable in the Age of Reason.¹² Rousseau appealed to that fashion and passed it on to the romanticists of the nineteenth century. That was the nearest pre-revolutionary France ever came to irrationalism. Rousseau has gone down in history as the founder of romanticism. But the prophet of sentimental romanticism was not honoured at home for any length of time. He wielded a much greater influence in Germany, and partially in England also. Sentimental romanticism in the latter country, however, remained confined to literature, which also soon recovered the balance. In Germany, it inspired a chauvinistic cultural movement and an aggressive political philosophy bound to do incalculable harm.

After the Thirty Years War, Germany lay prostrate, spiritually exhausted. Until the foundation of the kingdom of Prussia; it was a period of the worst kind of feudal anarchy, which was terminated by the rise of military monarchy to replace the theological kingship of the Middle-Ages. Political development in that direction had begun in France under Richelieu after the religious wars. In Germany, the Hohenzollerns of Brandenburg followed suit; but the kingdom of Prussia was not firmly established until the beginning of the eighteenth century. The socio-historical significance of that development was the triumph of the spirit of the Renaissance over that of Reformation; it was secularisation of politics. The Reformation and Counter-Reformation having cancelled each other, the Renaissance survived the vicissitudes of two centuries of religious wars, social dissolution and political chaos.

Nevertheless, during that intervening period of militant orthodoxy, rampant bigotry and flagrant intolerance, except in France and far-away England, the aesthetic and cultural tradition of the Renaissance had degenerated into empty formality. In Germany, during the latter half of the seventeenth century, intellectual life had sunk to the lowest level. Whatever literature was produced in that depressing atmosphere, as well as aesthetic taste in general, was under the influence of the post-Renaissance decadent culture of Italy, which "like a kind of blight spread over Europe and eclipsed the rich achievement of the earlier period when the light of antiquity had still dazzled Western eyes."¹³ The German manifestation of the blight of *Marinismo* was characteristically called "Schwulst"—bombast and buffoonery.

A characteristic feature of the history of German literature was recurring periods of depression unknown in the annals of other European countries. Political vicissitudes were not the sole cause of that misfortune; indeed, they had little to do with it. In other countries, arts and intellectual culture flourished in the midst of social disintegration and political chaos. The most outstanding instance of this apparently paradoxical experience of history was the Renaissance in Italy.¹⁴ The cause of this peculiarity is to be found in the nationalist preoccupation of German literature. The Germans were not able to adapt themselves to the various waves of literary and cultural influence which, emanating first from Italy and then from France, swept Europe for three hundred years—from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. German literature

and culture all along struggled against outside influence, particularly the so-called Latinism.

Throughout the Middle-Ages, mysticism was the most outstanding feature of German religious thoughts. Forerunners of the Reformation, like Reuchlin, were inspired by that mystic individualist culture. The struggle against clerical orthodoxy for Liberalism in thought and scholarship, conducted by Reuchlin, and after him, Erasmus, cleared the way for a healthy German literature. In the period of the Reformation, both Melancthon and von Hutten sympathised with Latin Humanism. In that period, satirical drama was the only form of literature which emancipated itself from the trammels of religious controversy. Thomas Murner (1475-1537), with his satirical dramas, led the assault upon Lutheran bigotry. In the latter half of the sixteenth century, Johannes Fischart's Rabelaisian satires introduced Humanism in German literature. The country was flooded with translations of the Renaissance Humanists. It was the time of Hans Sachs. Though an admirer of the "*Wuerttembergische Nachtigall*", Sachs left a vast literary legacy embracing every form of popular literature, which was a substantial contribution to the history of German culture. But as representative of the traditional spirit of German culture, Lutheran bigotry triumphed. The influence of Renaissance Humanism was shortlived in Germany. The conflict between nationalist Protestantism and the ambition of the Pope precipitated the Thirty Years' War, which plunged Germany into a prolonged state of political chaos, social disintegration, intellectual apathy and cultural reaction. Lutheranism degenerated into a paralysing orthodoxy. A pedantic scholasticism held the German mind in fetters. Literature was slighted by a pseudo-classicism.

The stagnation was borken by a revival of mysticism in poetry. It imitated the romanticism of the late Renaissance, and preached patriotism through folk songs. The leader of the mystic romantic school of literature, Opitz (1597-1639) ushered in the era of German *Marinismo*. His book on poetry became the theoretical text book of the German romantic literature for a hundred years. During that period, German poetry and drama degenerated into *Schwulst* (bombast).

Friedrich von Logau (the first Silesian school) was the first to rebel against the shallowness and vulgarity of pseudo-romanticism. His epigrams exposed the vices of the time and held up to

ridicule the vain bloodshed of the Thirty Years' War waged in the interest of Christianity. The standard of revolt was carried forward by Grimmelshausen. *Der Abeneuerliche Simplizissimus* was the best novel of that period. It was uncompromisingly realistic in depicting the results of the Thirty Years' War. On the other hand, German Marinismo touched the lowest depth in the second Silesian school of Lohenstein and Hoffmann Walden.

Pending the slow process of social recovery from the consequences of the Thirty Years' War, intellectual life recuperated under the rationalist influence of Samuel Puffendorf, Christian Wolff and Leibniz.

The cultural and literary revival of Germany began with Brockes at the close of the seventeenth century. He could be called the pioneer of German romanticism. Having begun his literary career as a Marinist, he was the first to be repelled by the bad taste of Schwulst and come under the influence of Milton and early English romanticists. A reverential attitude towards nature and religious interpretation of natural phenomena were the characteristic features of his poetry. His main work *Irdiscches Vergnuegen in Gott* introduced natural religion in Germany. In contrast to the religious bigotry, puritanical pose and moral cant of the Reformation, Brockes' poetry breathed the pagan and humanist spirit of the Renaissance. Belief in God could be reconciled with happiness on this earth. Piety did not preclude pleasure. The literary revival initiated by Brockes, now almost completely forgotten, attained maturity in Klopstock and Kleist. But in the intervening period, there was a development in the contrary direction.

The shaft of Bouhours' criticism was also directed against *Schwulst*. With his notorious arrogance, he questioned: "Can a German possess spirit"? (The French word "esprit" has a much broader connotation). Stung to the quick, by the French criticism, a group of German writers founded the *Deutschuebende Poetische Gesellschaft* at Leipzig with the object of combatting the vulgarity of the *Schwulst*, and reviving the classical spirit in German literature. Gottsched was the leader of the group. At that time, Boileau was the mentor of literary taste in the whole of Europe. So, the new literary movement came under the influence of French classicism. While Leibniz and Thomasius advocated improvement of the German language and the creation of a typically German literature (although Leibniz himself wrote mostly in Latin and

French), Gottsched and his group tried to imitate the French style and subordinated themselves to the criterion of French criticism. Plagiarising Boileau, he laid down rules to guide the writing of poetry and particularly drama. He was rather a pedagogue than a poet and fell into the errors of formalism and artificiality. Nevertheless, he was the harbinger of German classicism, and as such prepared the ground for Lessing, although the latter severely castigated his attempt to put poetry in the straight-jacket. Nevertheless, Gottsched did succeed in driving bombast and buffoonery from the German stage. that itself was an achievement. Without the now almost forgotten Gottsched, there might not have been a Lessing.

The Italian influence reasserted itself on German literature through the Zurich school of Bodmer and Breitinger. But, in the meanwhile, the aesthetic theory and literary taste in Italy had survived the post-Renaissance decadence. The neo-romantic period of the Italian literature had been ushered in by Muratori and Gravina. Bodmer and Breitinger were influenced by the new movement; they were also attracted by Milton and were not ignorant of Shakespeare. But the Italian influence was predominating. They pleaded for the freedom of imagination in poetry and opposed what they called the pseudo-classicism of the Leipzig school. They held that not reason but imagination was the instrument of artistic creation, and insisted that no restriction should be imposed upon it by prescribed rules of form and style. The main issue of the controversy was the legitimacy of the miraculous in poetry; and the Zurich school won the battle. "The victory of the Swiss meant the liberation of poetry from its long thralldom to the reason; the poet was free to soar."¹⁵

The literary controversy had a philosophical implication. It was the conflict between secularism and the lingering religious bias. The French classical literature of the age of Corneille and Racine heralded the Enlightenment. A German literary revival on that model, as Gottsched recommended, had the same historical significance; it marked the beginning of the *Aufklärung*. Italian neo-romanticism was anti-Cartesian and as such was devoutly Catholic. It was a reaction against the pagan spirit of the Renaissance. It is true that the Zurich school of literary romanticism was influenced also by the poet of the English revolution. But they were attracted rather by the Puritanism of Milton than by the revolutionary appeal

of the *Paradise Lost*. Therefore, with all their Lutheran piety, Bodmer and Breitinger could not produce anything even faintly resembling a religious epic with a powerful revolutionary appeal. That was to be done by Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1804), who originally belonged to the Zurich school, but was repelled by its narrow pedantry and circumscribed vision. The *Messiah* was the first masterpiece of German romantic literature. As a true romanticist of the Renaissance tradition, Klopstock, while nearing his sixtieth year, hailed the Great Revolution and called upon his countrymen to follow the example of their French brothers. Klopstock's nationalism found its noblest expression in his regret that Germany was not the first to raise the banner of freedom.

Under Lessing's leadership, German literary revival moved definitely towards classicism. Although he brushed aside the pedantry of Gottsched, as well as rejected the religious orthodoxy of the Zurich school, Lessing had more in common with the former who, with all his shortcomings, was the pioneer of German classicism. Lessing fully shared Gottsched's admiration for the French literature which heralded the Enlightenment. Maintaining that German literature could not simply be an imitation of the French, Lessing nevertheless was very sympathetically inclined towards the eighteenth century French philosophy and freely admitted that he had learned more from Diderot than from anybody else. At home, he was the severest critic of the half-hearted, cowardly, false prophets of the Aufklärung, who actually hindered spiritual emancipation by confusing philosophy with theology, by preaching a "rational Christianity" as against the old Lutheran orthodoxy. Lessing characterised them as neither Christian nor rational. While Lessing was the founder of German classicism, his contemporary, Hamann, the "Magi of the North", preached romanticism which grew out of the native soil, so to say.

Curiously enough, one of the greatest Germans and keenest intellects of all times, lived during the period of spiritual coma which preceded the revival of German literature and outburst of German philosophy. Born two years before the conclusion of the ruinous Thirty Years War (1618-1648), Leibniz died thirteen years before the birth of Lessing (1729-1781). But he was rather a European than a German, of the tradition of Roman universalism, as much at home in Paris as at the court of Hannover. It was not until the eighteenth century that national consciousness was fostered to put

an end to cultural cosmopolitanism and Christian universalism of the Middle-Ages. Spiritually living in the idealised mediaeval atmosphere, Leibniz was indifferent or oblivious of the actual condition of Germany. Nevertheless, his philosophy was one of the major factors which provided the spiritual impetus to German revival.

The conflict of classicism and romanticism in the German *Aufklärung* literature and the degeneration of the latter into chauvinistic nationalism, even after the two apparently antagonistic views of life had found a grand synthesis in Goethe, took place on the background of the philosophical consequences of the Reformation. The protracted quarrel over Christian dogmas kept the intellectual life of Germany more or less isolated from the main current of European thought which originated in the Renaissance. Consequently, scholasticism had a longer lease of life. The deplorable condition of Germany in the seventeenth century was brought about "by the intellectual exhaustion of the country after the great struggles of the Reformation, by its political agitation and its moral degeneration. While all other nations profited by the fresh breath of nascent intellectual liberty, it appeared as though Germany had fallen a victim in the struggle to obtain it. Nowhere did ossified dogmatism seem narrower than among the German Protestants, and the natural sciences especially had a difficult position. While skepticism, sensationalism and materialism gained ground in France and England, Germany remained the ancestral home of pedantic scholasticism, as it were. The restlessly fermenting element, which in France became increasingly active, was not entirely wanting in Germany. But it was diverted by the predominance of religious views into various curiously involved, and at the same time subterranean paths, and the confessional schism dissipated the best forces of the nation in interminable struggles ending in no lasting result. In the Universities, an increasingly rude generation took possession of the chairs and the benches."¹⁶

During the latter half of the seventeenth century, Germany provided the leadership of the opposition to the new philosophy preached by Descartes, Bacon, Hobbes, Spinoza and Locke. Leibniz made a valiant effort to save the lost cause of theology, and he succeeded to such an extent that his philosophy, simplified by Wolff into "rational psychology", wielded a considerable influence in Germany up to the first half of the eighteenth century. German

romanticism grew in that reactionary philosophical atmosphere. The authority of Leibniz kept the Cartesian philosophy out of Germany until the end of the seventeenth century. Ultimately, when the new philosophy did break into the last stronghold of reaction, it came as the mystic pantheism of Spinoza to inspire German romanticism.

At the dawn of the modern times, rationalism thus occupied a very minor place in the spiritual evolution of Germany. Leibniz was indeed a rationalist, though of the scholastic tradition; and he used scholastic rationalism to combat the secularisation of reason. Previously, even rationalist theology had been discarded. The Reformation was a throwback to the fundamentalist faith, which had no use for rationalist theology. Melancthon's attempt to resurrect Aristotle resulted in an intolerance unsurpassed even the dark Middle-Ages. Therefore, German romanticism was so very unbalanced, and ultimately turned out to be more reactionary than in post-revolutionary France. As a matter of fact, the reckless romanticism preached by Rousseau found a most congenial atmosphere in Germany; the mystic concept of General Will became the foundation of the German doctrine of the all-powerful State.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, Germany came out of her intellectual isolation under the leadership of the Prussian King Frederick the Great (1712-86). He invited to his Court eminent scientists and men of letters from other countries, particularly, France. Not only did Voltaire live three years in Sanssouci, the famous French mathematician Maupertuis was invited to accept the Presidency of the Prussian Academy founded by Frederick's grandfather. It was renamed *Academie des Sciences et Letters*. Its scientific section was placed in charge, at first of the Swiss mathematician Euler and thereafter of Lagrange. Thirteen out of the eighteen members of the Academy were foreigners, mostly French. Even de la Mettrie, evicted from France and Holland, was welcome in the Prussian Court. French became the Court language. "The intellectual atmosphere was so French" as made Voltaire feel that he was still in France. In 1752, Winckelmann said that he had found Sparta and Athens at Potsdam. Voltaire wrote: "In the morning he is a great king; after dinner, a talented author; and always a humanist philosopher." Frederick himself described the atmosphere of his Court as "the feast of reason and the flow of soul."

Enthusiasm, and perhaps also the ambition to be the "*Roi Soleil*" of Germany undoubtedly carried Frederick too far. "Yet, his neglect of the intellectual springtime of his country, however regrettable for himself, may be regarded on the balance as a blessing. It was far better for the German mind to develop on its own lines than to be cramped by the patronage of the Crown."¹⁷ In his little treatise on German literature published in 1780, Frederick described Germany as he found her in his youth. "The root of the trouble is in the language, a *demi barbare*, which it is impossible even for a genius to handle with effect. Let us be sincere and frankly confess that so far belles lettres have not prospered on our soil. Germany had produced philosophers, but not poets or historians. German culture had been thrown back by the Thirty Years War". What was to be done to improve the situation? The first task was to perfect the German language. The classics of all languages, ancient and modern, should be translated, so that writers and readers might learn from the best models. France had shown the world what could be achieved. In the seventeenth century, her authors set the standard for the whole of the continent. Germany should learn from her. Philosophy should be taught in its historical evolution, from the Greeks to Locke.

That was an ambitious, but realistic programme of spiritual revival of a country which had sunk to the lowest depth of stagnation. If Frederic failed to appreciate the splendid outburst of German genius during his lifetime, the historical significance of his bold pioneering efforts could not be minimised. It was under the impact of the French Enlightenment that the belated German Renaissance took place. And it stands to Frederick's credit that he anticipated the coming of the Golden Age. He wrote: "Let us have some Medicis, and we shall have some geniuses. An Augustus will make a Virgil. We shall have our classical authors; everyone will wish to read and profit by them. Those bright days of our literature have not yet come. But they are drawing nigh. I announce that they will appear, though I am too old to witness them. I am like Moses, and I gaze from afar at the Promised Land."

The Renaissance came to Germany through France; and Frederick acted as the usher. That fact, however, had an unfortunate effect. It created an inferiority complex in the average German mind, which, though overwhelmed for a time by the humanist cosmopolitan spirit of the Aufklärung, became the evil genius of

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German history. From Fichte, German romanticism came to be an irrational outburst of a morbid psychology. But before it so degenerated, romanticism attained the fullest glory in Germany, and in that period of maturity it was neither a cult of irrationalism nor the antithesis of classicism. The historical connotation of the German word *Aufklärung* is thought illuminated by reason; obedience to tradition and authority was to be replaced by individual judgment, which could be formed only through free enquiry.

"The romantic doctrine is in fact no less a daughter of the Renaissance than the faith of Boileau (1636-1711) himself. The antagonism between classic and romantic thought has, indeed, a strangely unsubstantial basis, when it is examined closely. To understand not the antithesis of classicism and romanticism, but their synthesis, is the way progress lies."¹⁸

Romanticism so interpreted was represented by Herder and the Weimar poets, but Herder soon differed from the latter's formidolatriy. With Goethe and Schiller, romanticism was a literary trend; with Herder, it was a philosophy. Goethe also came around to the more comprehensive view; but then he called himself a classicist, although he never abandoned the romantic conception of self-culture, which was the cardinal principle of his personal philosophy. While Herder raised romanticism to the level of a philosophy, Goethe was the most perfect personification of that view of life—a spiritually free man, who could transcend the limitations of his environment, creative in every respect—in literature, science and philosophy; the first "whole man" representing the totality of human genius since Leonardo.

The roots of German romanticism as developed by Herder might be traced to Vico; but it had nothing to do with Rousseau. It originated in Hamann's revolt against Kant, when the latter moved away from the ground of science to construct a system of transcendental metaphysics. He undertook the critique of pure reason not only under the influence of Hume's scepticism, but also, as Cassirer has shown, was deeply impressed by Rousseau's revolt against reason.¹⁹ So, the positive aspect of German romanticism was not a cult of irrationalism. It was a development of scientific naturalism, which was enriched by a greater appreciation of the role of man in history. Subjectivism is not necessarily irrational; there is no such thing as purely objective knowledge.

The proclamation of the sovereignty of man, that he is capable

of making his own destiny, ceased to be a dogma opposed to the old dogmas of religion when a new insight into the historic and pre-historic past revealed that human history is not the process of the unfoldment of a divine purpose; that, on the contrary, it is the sum total of human endeavour from time immemorial. The new understanding of history provided a scientific foundation to the romantic view of life, which centers around the faith in man's creativeness. With the rise of the scientific philosophy of history, the humanist faith of romanticism became an empirical proposition. Vico had blazed the trail; but it was Herder who made a philosophy of romanticism. He viewed man as a part of nature, all the widely differing forms of human development being natural processes. Kant interpreted human development as the growing faculty of the rational free will opposed to the operation of nature. In contrast to the Kantian super-natural anthropology, Herder defined history as 'a pure natural history of human powers, actions and propensities modified by time and place'.²⁰

In such a view of human development, as part of the process of biological evolution, the distinction between instinct and intelligence disappears; the corollary is the abolition of the dichotomy of intuition and reason. Herder's romanticism thus was far from being a revolt against reason; on the contrary, it conceived nature, including man, as a natural process. Herder thought that instinct was associated with the lower level of biological evolution, and intelligence with the higher. In other words, instinct is the primitive form of intelligence, and intelligence is discriminating instinct.

Deduced from an identical source—"the natural history of human powers, actions and propensities"—ethics and aesthetics became united in Herder's romanticism. He conceived art as the expression of the totality of human feelings and human life; logically, he attached greater value to the content of artistic creations than to their form, and emphasised the moral element in art. But Herder was not a moralist; he was a humanist. Reminiscent of the Cartesian dictum—"the highest truth is the highest beauty"—he held that there was a close connection between the good and the beautiful. Herder rose above the controversy between classicism and romanticism in literature by declaring that the criterion to judge aesthetic values was not form; it was not a mere matter of taste; but their human content. He merged the romantic theory of aesthetics into the humanist philosophy.

In the earlier part of his long career, as the pole star of Germany's Augustan age, Goethe was more of a romanticist than Herder. In *Goetz von Berlichingen*, he idealised the picture of the robber-knights of the sixteenth century and ushered in the fateful *Sturm und Drang* period of German romanticism; fateful, because the glorification of the role of heroes in history encouraged the cult of Teutonism, which Goethe himself subsequently denounced as a barbarous extravagance. The *Sorrows of Werther* won for Goethe the reputation of being the greatest writer of contemporary Europe. Sentimentalism is the main theme; but the underlying gospel is that the world belongs to the strong. The *Sturm und Drang* concept of romanticism was reinforced. It reaches its climax in the earlier part of *Faust*, where eternal dissatisfaction is described as the essence of life. Having long been "disgusted with knowledge", the young Faust cries: "Let us appease burning passions in the depth of natural sensuality. Let us hurl ourselves into time's dynamic sweep." Yet, in an advanced age, Faust complains that he had never lived, and bought from Mephistopheles the offer of a satiated life at the price of his soul. The heroic concept of life becomes "demoniac" under the storm and stress of experience. At that stage, Goethe himself recoils from the reckless romanticism of his youth; but the cult of life-worship, which is nothing but sublimated selfishness, became the essence of post-Aufklärung romanticism—the glorification of the lawless becoming of the hero and his demoniac greatness went into the making of the fantastic but fearful concept of the superman. The giant of the romantic age lived long enough to be repelled by the result of the extravagance of his own youthful enthusiasm and to pronounce the verdict: "The classical, I call healthy, and the romantic, the diseased." Goethe warned Germany particularly against the romanticism which revived the heroic lore of the *Nibelungen Saga*, condemning it as a return to the pre-Roman barbarism.

In the second part of *Faust*, Goethe's view of life changes. It becomes the epitome of the history of the time, and also a mirror of the poet's own life, enriched by experience and a more realistic conception of man's place in history and his duties to society. It depicts a picture of the struggle between romance and realism, sentimentality and sober judgment, faith and reason, emotional abandon and critical conscience, naivete and cynicism.

In *Faust*, there is a whole philosophy of life deduced from ripe

experience and based upon a profound wisdom. It is not a closed system of hypothetical propositions and final truths logically deduced from them; it is a system of thought, in the process of evolution, modified as well as enriched by expanding experience. It is a vivid picture of life actually lived, "such as no European poet had given to the world since the Renaissance".²¹ Therefore, *Faust* has been described as the "divine comedy of eighteenth century Humanism".

A philosophy of life depicted in the process of crystallisation, out of the unstable amalgam of experience, unstable because of the unpredictable elements of life, is expounded autobiographically in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. Poetry, after all, is not all fantasy. Subjectivism short of selfishness does not blast the foundation of objective truth. To harmonise ethics with aesthetics is the essence of the romantic view of life. Goethe succeeded where most men of the Renaissance had failed. Therefore, he can be called the perfect embodiment of the spirit of the Renaissance—the archetype of the modern European. As such, he closed the idle controversy between romanticism and classicism by denying the supposed contradiction between the concepts of freedom and law. "Genius above all is willing to obey the law; for, genius knows that art is not nature. And only law can give us freedom."

NOTES

1. Pascal, *Pensees*.
2. *Parallèle entre les Anciens et les Modernes*.
3. Flint, *History of the Philosophy of History*.
4. J.G. Robertson, *The Genesis of the Romantic Theory*.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Emile Krantz, *Essai sur l'Esthétique de Descartes*.
7. Flint, *History of the Philosophy of History*.
8. J.G. Robertson, *The Genesis of the Romantic Theory*.
9. "One reason for Vico's antipathy (for Descartes) was that he, with his strong religious bias, saw in Descartes a serious danger to the authority of the Catholic faith. Descartes prefers to them (historical sciences) his metaphysics, his physics and his mathematics, and thus reduces literature to the knowledge of the Arabs." Introduction to the *Autobiography of Giambattista Vico*, translated by M.H. Fisch and P.G. Bergin.

10. J.G. Robertson, *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. "The first great figure in the movement is Rousseau, but to some extent he only expressed already existing tendencies. Cultivated people in eighteenth century France greatly admired what they called *la sensibilité*, which meant a proneness to emotion and more particularly to the emotion of sympathy. To be thoroughly satisfactory, the emotion must be direct and violent, and quite uninformed by thought. The man of sensibility would be moved to tears by the sight of a single destitute peasant family, but would be cold to well thought out schemes for ameliorating the lot of peasants as a class. The poor were supposed to possess more virtue than the rich." (Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*).
13. J.G. Robertson, *The Genesis of Romantic Theory*.
14. Only in the twentieth century, Germany also had a similar experience. Arts and culture reached the highest degree of efflorescence during the years immediately after her crushing defeat in the First World War, when for a short time, under the Weimar Republic, the liberal cosmopolitan outlook overwhelmed nationalist jingoism among a large number of artists and intellectuals.
15. J.G. Robertson, *Ibid.*
16. Lange, *History of Materialism*.
17. G.P. Gooch, *Frederick the Great*.
18. J.G. Robertson, *The Genesis of Romantic Theory*.
19. Ernst Cassirer, *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe*.
20. *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte*.
21. *Encyclopedia Britannica* (13th Edition).

Chapter XIV

ROMANTIC EXTRAVAGANCE

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, Rousseau's influence spread to Germany, and romanticism became an ally of cultural and philosophical reaction. Revolting against the "mechanical spirit of science", it cultivated poetic mysticism in tune with the post-revolutionary reaction in France. As against the classical romantic ideal of individual freedom, it preached the cult of the "spiritual whole". At the same time, it exalted the notion of the particular heroic personality in opposition to the cosmopolitan, democratic, humanist individual. Logically, reason was subordinated to emotion, and the *Volkgeist* was placed above individual judgment. A distorted version of Darwinism came in handy to provide a pseudo-scientific sanction for the cult of the superman. "Caught in an obscure welter of motives, thought turned readily in the direction of Darwinism—a philosophy which, distorted from the ideas of its author, was playing havoc with political and moral ideas in Western Europe as well as in Germany. Henceforth, the political thought of Germany is marked by a curious dualism—an abundance of remnants of romanticism and lofty idealism; and a realism which goes to the verge of cynicism and of utter indifference to all ideals and all morality; but what you will see above all is an inclination to make an astonishing combination of the two elements—in a word, to brutalise romance and to romanticise cynicism."¹

The typically German romanticism began to take shape in the beginning of the nineteenth century as a reaction to the ideas and ideals of the Great Revolution. Its object was to provide a pseudo-philosophical sanction to nationalism, which was rising to resist the powerful appeal of the revolution. The post-Aufklärung German romanticism, therefore, was indeed a revolt against the eighteenth century. It was a reaction to the penetration of French

culture, which at that time represented the high-water mark of modern Europeanism.

In Prussia, a cultural revolution was imposed from above; but in the rest of Germany, particularly in the regions bordering France, the Enlightenment had spread in a normal manner. Imitating the Italian tyrants of the Renaissance period, German Princes patronised learning, literature and art. Leibniz lived at the court of Hannover; Klopstock, Lessing, Kleist and their contemporaries, in Saxony; and the little Dutchy of Weimar could be called the Athens of the later eighteenth century. And learning and culture everywhere welcomed the influence of France.

In the nineteenth century, German romanticism identified itself with Nationalism, which drew inspiration from Herder's idea of the folk soul and also from the *Sturm und Drang* romanticism of young Goethe. But with Herder, folk-soul was an anthropological concept. He conceived the process of historical evolution as an "organic, plant-like unfolding of folk-souls." It was indeed a romantic notion, borrowed most probably from Vico and full of dangerous implications. Nevertheless, Herder conceived it as a hypothesis of his cosmopolitan Humanism. All early romanticists imagined that the mystic folk-soul was the fountain-head of the inspiration for beautiful literature. After the French Revolution, glorification of the German folk-soul became the credo of romanticism. "The lyrical poets of the (German) romantic school were inspired by the new national sentiment. In contrast with the spirit of humanity of the eighteenth century, the conception gained currency of an essential genius peculiar to each people, manifested in the works of its past and the spontaneous output of the popular masses—beliefs, tales, songs, in which German romantics sought their material."²

Romanticism was claimed as a specially German virtue—an outburst of the Teutonic soul. "Romanticism is Germanic and reached its purest expression in those territories which are freest from Roman colonisation. Everything that is regarded as an essential aspect of the romantic spirit—irrationalism, the mystic welding together of subject and object, the tendency to intermingle the arts, the longing for the far-away and the strange, the feeling for the infinite and the continuity of historic development—all these are characteristic of German romanticism, and so much so that their union remains unintelligible to the Latins. What is known as

romanticism in France, has only its name in common with German romanticism."³

This neo-romanticism had its roots in the image of the two conflicting souls which haunted Goethe in the earlier part of *Faust*. Eventually, that poetic obsession gave birth to the highly tendentious doctrine of the contrast between *Kultur* and civilisation. The latter was Latin, Western; whereas *Kultur* was German. Fichte expounded this doctrine in his famous *Speeches to the German Nation*. He reminded the Germans that they were the *Urvolk* who spoke the *Ursprache*, which gave them the contact with the forces of nature. Therefore, declaimed the philosopher of German nationalism, German minds returned more easily than those of other nations to the instincts and concepts of the primitive world, from which the West, under the joint influence of classical thought and Christianity, had sought to escape. German nationalism was thus admittedly a revolt of barbarism against civilisation; *Kultur* was the virtue of Rousseau's noble savage. Only, when the savage comes to the civilised world to demonstrate his virtue, he turns out to be anything but noble.

"If Western Europe, international in mind and tendency, looks upon civilisation as a system of ways of behaviour and spiritual ideas that are humane and susceptible of universal application, the Germans understand by *Kultur* an intimate union between themselves and the natural forces of the Universe, whose action they alone are capable of apprehending, and as a tribal discipline designed to turn those forces to account. Fichte insisted, only the Germans know the method of realising this intimate Union."⁴

German nationalism was romantic in the sense that it rejected the "arid rationalism" of the West. As the philosopher of the universal history of humanity, revealed in the light of anthropology and philology as evolutionary processes, Herder has been immortalised as the "gate-keeper" of the nineteenth century. But ironically, German nationalism, inspired by his concept of the folk-soul, discarded his cosmopolitan-humanist philosophy and interpreted history as a "lawless becoming", breeding-ground of superman and Fuehrers of immaculate conception, and therefore, naturally absolved from all responsibility.

"Whoever believes in the existence of a natural, eternal and divine law, I mean, in a common and universal basis of humanity, and sees the very essence of humanity in this universal basis,

will see in German thought a queer mixture of mysticism and brutality. But whoever considers that history is an unceasing creation of living individual forms, which are ordered according to a continually variable law, will see in Western ideas the product of an arid rationalism, a levelling atomism—in short, a mixture of platitude and pharisaicism."⁵

If Fichte was the philosopher of romantic nationalism, its most fanatic preacher was Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1772-1852), affectionately called by his disciples, Father Jahn, because of the long beard the young man bore as a standing protest of the caveman against civilisation.⁶ Together with the poet Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769-1860), Jahn became famous as "the populariser of the teaching of the folk-soul." Herder had just died; he must have turned in his grave. For a book on the German language, Jahn got a doctorate from the Leipzig University. While as student, he came under the influence of the new-romantic movement founded in 1800 by the Schlegel brothers (August Wilhelm von and Friedrich von). With the basic credo of folk-soul, the new school of German romanticism raised the issue of "the organic versus atomistic society". Romanticism began to betray itself; free development of individual personality was its original credo. A most fanatical convert to the new creed of a falsified romanticism, Jahn "purified" his book on philology by purging it of all "unGermanic words". The tradition of the Nazis was more than a hundred years old. Jahn presently went further in his fanaticism. He declared that he was opposed to the slogan, *Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite*, not because it was the cry of the Great Revolution, but because they were French words.

Jahn preached that the unconscious force of the folk shaped history. This mystic force he called the *Volkstum*—"that which the folk has in common, its inner existence, its movement, its ability to propagate. Because of it, there courses through all the veins of folk a folk-like thinking and feeling, loving and hating, intuition and faith."⁷

Jahn's fanatastic ideas were collected in a book called *Volkstrum*. In it, he wrote that the Greeks and the Germans were "humanity's holy peoples." That was anticipating Hegel, who wrote a whole philosophy of history to prove that the Greeks and the Germans alternately incarnated God. Hegel was not a romanticist; by his time, romanticism had ceased to be a fashion; metamorphosed as

culturally chauvinistic nationalism, it had become the ominous shadow of a terrible reality cast ahead. Jahn anticipated not only Hegel, but also Hitler. He called for the biological purity of the folk. "Animal hybrids have no genuine power of propagation, and hybrid peoples have just as little posterity. The purer a people, the better; the more mixed, the worse."⁸ The Mediterranean peoples belong to the hybrid race; they have no folk-souls; therefore, they have no future. Thanks to their isolated existence, the Germans were the only pure race with the folk-soul; the future belongs to them.

Placed side by side with Fichte's *Speeches to the German Nation*, Jahn's *Volkstum* was treated as the gospel of German nationalism. The two, an uncouth ruffian and a philosopher, were honoured as "the spiritual godfathers of the newer Germany."⁹ Another irony of history!

The bastard of German romanticism was still to degrade it to its very opposite; individualism was to be sacrificed for the satiation of the collective ego—the folk-soul. Jahn called for "the participation of the individual in the happiness and suffering of the whole". And the romantic soul of Germany responded to the appeal. That abject self-abnegation was the apotheosis of German romanticism.

Richard Wagner was "the last mushroom on the dunghill of romanticism."¹⁰ In 1830, according to his own testimony, Wagner "became a revolutionary at one bound". He declared that art's mission was to "rise above national vanity to a feeling of universality," and prayed that "the master will come who writes in neither Italian nor French nor German fashion."¹¹ In that ecstatic state of mind, he went to Paris—"the capital of world culture". Under the influence of the "French ideas of rationalism and atomistic liberalism", Wagner proudly called himself an "anti-mystic materialist". Three years after, he returned to Germany—a morbid Francophobe. In his autobiography, he wrote: "What awoke my longing for my German homeland was the feeling of homelessness" born of atomistic individualism, wrongly identified with the romantic view of life. The reaction was to lose himself in an organic collectivity. In that rebound, he composed *Meistersinger*, which concludes with the chorus warning Germans against the corrupting influence of the West. Nietzsche called the *Meistersinger* a "lance against civilisation".

After the abortive revolution of 1848, romanticism found a philosophical umbrage in Schopenhauer's doctrine of the omnipotent free will. Wagner's *Tristan* breathed that new philosophy. He repudiated his former "optimistic faith in reason and progress", and declared that "nothing really happens but what has issued from this Will—a headlong blind impulse". He discovered that there was a German music and a Jewish music, the one good and the other bad. To glorify the good German music, he dramatised the Teutonic myths, the romanticism against which Goethe had sounded a warning. Wagner's was the swan song of German romanticism. He cried: "Be brave enough to deny the intellect," to be tossed by Schopenhauer's Will—the dark brooding force which the pessimistic philosopher hated and which he wanted to be resisted and destroyed by human spirit. But Wagner preached complete abandon, abject surrender: "Ye err when Ye seek the revolutionary force in consciousness and would fain operate through the intellect. Not Ye will bring the new to pass, but the folk which deals unconsciously and, for that reason, from nature-instinct. Revolution is the movement of the mass towards acquisition and employment of the force hitherto in the hands of the unit. The mass attains to the same force as the individual, and only this standpoint is freedom possible." On the authority of Rousseau, Robespierre had declared that liberty must be imposed on the minority which disagreed with the General Will; and Wagner gave the cue to the Nazi Storm-Trooper who said: "We spit on freedom, the folk must be free." They recognised their indebtedness to the romanticist Wagner by eulogising him as "the revolutionist against the nineteenth century."¹² German romanticism thus was not only a revolt against the revolutionary eighteenth century, but also the liberal-democratic nineteenth century.

The romantic revolt in Germany had such a far-reaching significance because it found a new sanction in the predominating philosophy of the nineteenth century. The empiricism of the eighteenth century philosophy, particularly of Locke and Hume, had weakened the subjectivist foundation of the Cartesian system. German idealism from Leibniz to Schopenhauer revived subjectivism, which provided a philosophical support to the pseudo-romantic cult of self-love. The Leibnizian monad became the ideal of romantic individualism; self-development, the fundamental principle of ethics. Goethe's cult of self-culture evidently was

related Monadology. But subjectivist morality may also lead to moral nihilism, as demonstrated by the extravagances of the aberrations of the nineteenth century romantic revolt.

"The romantic movement, in its essence, aimed at liberating the human personality from the fetters of social convention and social morality. But egoistic passions, when once let loose, are not easily brought again into subjection to the needs of society. The romantic movement brought the revolt into the sphere of morals. By encouraging a new lawless ego, it made social cooperation impossible, and left its disciples with the alternative or anarchy of despotism. Egoism at first made man expect from others a parental tenderness; but when they discovered with indignation that others also had their ego, the disappointed desire for tenderness turned to hatred and violence. Man is not a solitary animal, and so long as social life survives, self-realisation cannot be the supreme principle of ethics."¹³

Romanticism in philosophy reached the climax in Fichte. For him, the ego was the only ultimate reality; it exists by postulating itself. The metaphysical concept of the ego was presently attributed to the folk. The ego of the German people was the supreme reality. As Bertrand Russell remarks, Fichte carried his collective subjectivism to "a kind of insanity" when he declared "to have character and to be a German undoubtedly mean the same thing." The insanity was so very contagious that Goethe's satire of it became a favourite slogan of nationalism. In *Faust*, a romantic youth exclaims: "In Germany you are a liar, if you are polite."

Romantic egoism consumed itself. Since the ego is the only ultimate reality, there cannot be a plurality of egos. The concept of the folk-soul, therefore, meant elimination of individual egos, even of the insane philosopher himself. Fichte was the philosopher of totalitarianism. Schelling pushed romantic philosophy a step further in his conception of the World-Soul. The Universe is an indivisible organism, greater than the sum total of all its parts. On that philosophical foundation, Hegel built his metaphysical theory of the State. The Leviathan made no room for individual freedom. Having thus betrayed its own ideal, romanticism became an instrument of reaction.

The development of German philosophy was determined by its point of departure, which was a neo-scholastic tendency intended to combat the scientific naturalism and Humanism of the eigh-

teenth century. Not only Leibniz, but also Kant, Fichte and Hegel represented that retrograde tendency, which found its fullest expression in Schelling and Schopenhauer. It was a revival of theology and subordination of knowledge to a mystic pantheistic conception of will. Hume's scepticism is generally believed to be the starting point of Kant's critical philosophy. The fact, however, is that Kant regarded Hume's ideas as disruptive, to be combatted to safeguard metaphysical orthodoxy. His affinity with Rousseau was responsible for his sympathy with the Great Revolution in its earlier stages; and it was equally under Rousseau's influence that he provided a philosophical justification to the reactionary romantic revolt. But his apparently empirical epistemology introduced intuitionism in philosophy, though on a pseudo-scientific ground. A priori categories of knowledge conceded irrationalism a place in philosophy. "His philosophy allowed an appeal to the heart against the cold dictates of theoretical reason, which might, with a little exaggeration, be regarded as a pedantic version of the Savoyard Vicar."¹⁴

Schopenhauer divested Kant's philosophy of its scientific verbiage and revealed its core of irrationalism—of the tradition of Rousseau. By placing will above knowledge, he supported the romantic revolt, but abandoned its ground of philosophy, to relapse into religious mysticism. The romantic revolt, in its turn, degenerated into the irrational cult of cultural nationalism, which proved to be the greatest pest of the twentieth century. The tallest romanticist of the period realised the danger of nationalism. Goethe characterised it as a disease which "is the more virulent the more backward is the people." He also said: "Patriotism corrupts history." And Nietzsche, the last great exponent of romanticism, described nationalism as "this disease and madness most inimical to culture". Asking the Germans to forget Wagner, Fichte and Bismark, he prophesied: "Sluggish, hesitating races would require half a century ere they could surmount such atavistic attacks of patriotism and soil-attachement, and return once more to reason, that is to say, to good Europeanism."

The romantic revival of the Italian and German literature drew inspiration from Shakespeare, Milton and Addison. English literature had a tradition of its own, a tradition of non-conformism with the classicism of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Since Shakespeare had refused to conform with the classical ration-

alist criterion of poetry, the tradition of English aesthetics was romantic. Dryden tried to tip the scale on the side of classicism, but he had to make concessions to the native tradition. Finally, on the basis of a critical appreciation of the national literature, particularly of Milton, Addison formulated a theory of aesthetics which influenced the romantic movement in the continent. "In his suggestive paper on imagination, Addison laid the foundation of the whole romantic aesthetics in England. The new theory of creative imagination provided the basis on which the great German poetry of the later eighteenth century was reared."¹⁵

Milton, like Dante and Goethe, was a class by himself. Regarded as the genius of English Puritanism, he nevertheless rejected Calvinist orthodoxy. His *Areopagitica* was a passionate protest against the intolerance of religious bigotry, cast in the classical Athenian style. The principle of the freedom of speech, to make the truth triumph, defended boldly by the more rationalist Independents, came to be an article of faith of Liberalism. But at the same time, Milton anticipated Rousseau in expounding the doctrine of an aristocratic democracy. He was a democrat who demanded that the people should submit to the wisest and the best, to raise government beyond popular mutation, and to elevate civic duty into religion. He declared that, by the trial of just battles long ago, the people lost their right, and it is just that a less number compel a greater to retain their liberty rather than all be slaves.

Milton's idea about the origin of civil society was very much like that of Hobbes. But he lacked the latter's rigorous realism, and believed in the fall of man, which belief inspired the great epic *Paradise Lost*. So, Milton can be called a romanticist. "He is the best example of the stirring of men's souls to their very depths by the great issues of the time; the pitch of self-sacrifice to which they rose in devotion to their ideals, the foundations of the democratic movement in new religious conceptions."¹⁶

But the English nature-poets of the nineteenth century were influenced by German romanticism as well as by Rousseau's flight from reason. In the beginning, their revolt was purely aesthetic, against the utilitarian standards of modern civilisation. In a sense, a healthy movement; it became absurd when Darwin's praise of the earthworm for its usefulness was derided by comparison with the aesthetic grandeur of Blacke's admiration of the beauty of the tiger. But for the invidious comparison, one could appreciate the

aesthetic sense in the admiration of the beauty in the wild and the fearful. Yet, it went too far when the romanticists attached aesthetic value to everything strange, grand and terrifying, such as the Middle-Ages, Gothic architecture, deserted castles, so on and so forth. "Something which at one point is eccentricity or even madness, at another extravagance, at another the imagination that makes known the unknown, and that always has a little of the desire of the moth for the star, has never dropped out of English letters and English life. It is almost always accompanied by distrust of anything exact, completed, regular, planned. Life is conceived as a force that is weakened and eventually destroyed by any kind of constraint. Life must ever attempt the impossible, and fail; for the alternative to the attempt and the failure is death. Law, reason and convention try to set bounds to human activity, and make life impossible. Therefore, those who are on the side of romance will be for Nature against Art, and for all that grows against all that it made."¹⁷

All these might have been harmless aberrations, if, under German influence, British romanticists did not find a spiritual ideal in the idea of nation. It landed them in the camp of political reaction.

If revolt against reason was the essence of romanticism, then Burke was the greatest romanticist. To oppose the revolutionaries who addressed their appeal to human reason, Burke denied that reason was the right basis of politics, and maintained that, for a good government, belief in tradition, the lesson of accumulated experience and a hereditary ruling class incorporating the assets, were of supreme importance. His revolt against reason and revolution served the most unromantic purpose of providing conservatism with a philosophy.

Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey were in their late teens at the time of the Great Revolution, which they all hailed with enthusiasm. The fascinating ideas and lofty ideals of the revolution were propagated in England by William Godwin. His *Political Justice* introduced the young poets to a philosophy which combined scientific rationalism with romantic enthusiasm. But given to sentimental nature-worship, they were influenced more by Rousseau's romanticism than by the philosophy of the Enlightenment. Consequently, when the revolution failed to attain the utopia, poetic enthusiasm was dampened. Disillusioned romanticism allied itself with the enemies of the revolution. The conception of nature and

humanity of the Lake-poets was mystic and sentimental; it had little in common with scientific naturalism of the eighteenth century which inspired the ideology of the revolution. Disillusionment with the development of the revolution helped them to shake off the superficial loyalty to the ideals of cosmopolitan Humanism. Reactionary romanticism was flourishing in Germany. Wordsworth made a pilgrimage to the land of Goethe and Schiller; he came back with the realisation that motherland had a stronger hold on his affection than he had imagined. Southey said that the Peace of Amiens "restored in me the English feelings which had long been deadened and placed me in sympathy with my country". The romantic poets rallied behind Burke when he raised the standard of revolt against the eighteenth century and called for a crusade against the Great Revolution. Burke's "romantic" politics was a negation of democracy. "The people are not answerable to their present supine acquiescence; God and nature never made them to think or to act without guidance and direction", which could come only from the old aristocratic families—"the great Oaks that shade a country."¹⁸ And the romantic poet Coleridge is ranked with the Tory Canning as one of the worthiest disciples of Burke! Already in 1798, Coleridge wrote: "I have snapped my squeaking baby trumpet of sedition, and the fragments lie scattered in the lumber-room of penitence."

Coleridge, not quite a visionary like Wordsworth, tried to work out a whole system of philosophy to justify the reactionary role of the romanticism of the Lake poets. Drawing inspiration from Schelling, he hoped to reconcile a reinterpreted and purified Christianity with a transcendental philosophy. He proposed to base politics on that synthesis of philosophy and religion. Declaring that the curse of the age was the divorce of philosophy and politics from religion, he would combine scientific psychology and religious inspiration in an idealist philosophy under the sovereignty of a mystical Christianity. The mystic religious trend of British romanticism found the purest expression in Blacke's *Natural Theology*.

Byron and Shelley were the leaders of a romantic revival in England. They were also nature-worshippers, but for them "Nature" was an emotionalised version of the Reason of the philosophers of Enlightenment. They revolted against the compromise their elders, the Lake poets, had made with the established social order,

its laws, conventions and constraints. Proclaiming that change was the only law they obeyed, they wanted to change the given conditions of society and life. But they could not visualise the desired change in a historical perspective. Their romanticism was a burning faith in the creativeness of man, but it was not intellectually disciplined. The heart got the better of the head; imagination and enthusiasm were not buttressed on a solid foundation of knowledge and critical realism. Therefore, the heralds of a true romantic revival tended towards anarchism, and their magnificent revolt, expressed in sublime poetry, ended in despair.

To be more successful, the romantic revival must be inspired by the tradition of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. Reason and romanticism, law and freedom, intelligence and will, are not mutually exclusive. They are inextricably interwoven in the biological becoming of man. By grasping that basic fact of human existence, man moves forward on the endless road to freedom, which is not an ideal, but an experience. Human life itself is the greatest romantic adventure.

NOTES

1. Ernst Troeltsch, *The Ideas of Natural law and Humanity in World Politics*.
2. Charles Seignobos, *The Rise of Modern European Civilisation*.
3. Gustav Pauli, quoted in *Geschichte der Deutschen Kunst* by George Dehio.
4. A. Kolnai, *War Against the West*.
5. Ernst Troeltsch, *Deutscher Geist und Westeuropa*.
6. Jahn actually lived in a cave for some time, and like a besieged cave-man used to roll huge boulders down on the jeering crowd.
7. Friedrich Ludwig Jahn's *Werke*, edited by Karl Euler.
8. Ibid.
9. J. Friedrich, Jahn; *Als Erzieher*.
10. Max Nordau, *Degeneration*.
11. Richard Wagner, *Mein Leben*.
12. K.R. Ganzer; *Richard Wagner, Der Revolutionaer Gegen das Neunzehnte Jahrhundert*.
13. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*.
14. Ibid.
15. J.G. Robertson, *The Genesis of the Romantic Theory*.
16. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 13th Edition.
17. Crane Brinton, *The Political Ideas of the English Romanticists*.
18. *Letter to the Duke of Richmond*.

Chapter XV

LIBERALISM: ORIGIN AND TRADITION

The philosophical doctrines and political principles which contributed so very considerably to the Enlightenment had originated in England. The philosophers of the French Revolution were more influenced by Locke than by Descartes. Their mechanistic naturalism, based upon the physical and biological knowledge acquired during the previous two-hundred years, drew inspiration from the Renaissance and also from the Epicurean tradition revived by Gassendi. But directly, it was the outcome of the materialist rationalism of Hobbes. Nevertheless, while the revolutionary ideas, germinated in England, crossed over to the continent to inspire the Great Revolution, the country of their origin came under the reactionary influence of the Reformation. Under that influence, the revolution in Britain ended in a compromise.

The Humanism of the Renaissance led to the rationalism of the seventeenth century, the devastating critique of Bayle, the urban secularism of Montaigne and the iconoclasm of Voltaire—all contributing to the Enlightenment. But Protestant Puritanism degenerated into religious bigotry, cultural reaction and social conservatism. The British Government, controlled by the political disciples of Locke (Whigs), opposed the Great Revolution. Powerfully voicing "the revolt against the eighteenth century", Burke forced a differentiation in the Whig ranks, which split up between the conservative liberals and the radicals, the former joining the Tories against the menace of revolutionary democracy.

But rationalism survived Burke's onslaught. In the nineteenth century, Britain replaced France at the van of modern civilisation. A still-born child of the revolution in France, democracy, found a safer home across the Channel. The eighteenth century was the age of reason in alliance with romanticism. The Enlightenment was the result of the alliance. Therefore, it was the fecundest period

of modern history. The Enlightenmen spread the liberating message of man's creativeness in the tradition of the Renaissance, which, in its turn, was inspired by the heritage of ancient wisdom, culture, learning and knowledge. But the liberal rationalism of the nineteenth century drew its inspiration, to a great extent, from the Reformation, and therefore, reinforced conservatism as against romanticism. It was neo-classicism—a feeble imitation of the intellectual grandeur and cultural effulgence of the age of the Sun King on the continent or of the Elizabethan period in England. After the romanticism of the Lake Poets had landed them into the manly embrace of Toryism, Shelley and Byron represented the last flare of literature of the liberal age of prosperity and optimism.

The creativeness of human spirit, at the same time, found a magnificent expression in science. Having survived the romantic divagations of the Great Revolution, in the nineteenth century, reason quietly sowed the seeds of a far greater revolution. At the same time, man conquering nature with the power of rapidly growing scientific knowledge was his greatest romantic adventure.

Owing to the fact that the evolution of liberal thought in modern times synchronised with the growth of certain economic institutions—mercantilism and industrialism—had actually subserved their purpose, it has been called the ideology of the rising bourgeoisie. Economic factors and social changes, no doubt, influence ideas; but the economic interpretation of history or the sociological approach to the history of philosophy is often misleading. Nevertheless, it is no longer confined to the Marxists. Others have taken up the Marxist method of explaining the development of ideas. Professor Laski, for example, has done so in tracing the roots and growth of Liberalism. "What produced Liberalism was the emergence of a new economic society at the end of the Middle-Ages. As a doctrine it was shaped by the needs of that society."¹ Historically, that is hardly an accurate statement of fact. There was little of Liberalism in the economic society of the sixteenth or even of the seventeenth century. The mercantilist bourgeoisie was politically associated with the rising Nation-States asserting the divine right of despotic kings as against the supremacy of the Roman Church. As it has been pointed out by more penetrating historians, "there was a good deal more of Liberalism of a sort in the Middle-Ages than there was in the sixteenth century, the age of new despotism ... of thoroughgoing economic regulation in the

interest of the Nation-State."² Professor Laski himself modifies the statement quoted above. "It is customary to call the whole period between the Reformation and the French Revolution the age of mercantilism; and it is certainly true that until the latter part of the eighteenth century there was no wide appreciation of Liberalism in the economic field." The roots of Liberalism as a philosophy of life can, indeed, be traced in the intellectual ferment of the sixteenth century and earlier. But the philosophy was not appreciated by the bourgeoisie until a much later time. Liberalism, therefore, was not created by the needs of the economic society. As a philosophy, it developed independently, according to the logic of the evolution of thought. Later on, a particular class accepted it. This sequence of historical facts does not warrant the statement that Liberalism is the ideology of the bourgeoisie or, in other words, is the philosophy of capitalism.

Yet, critical scholars and sober historians, such as Max Weber, Sombart, Troeltsch, Hauser and Tawney, who do not share Professor Laski's sympathy for the Marxian economic interpretation of history, have tried to trace a causal connection between capitalist economy and Protestantism, which is supposed to be the source of inspiration of the liberal outlook on life. Max Weber, for instance, argues that the rise of capitalist economy was very much helped by the puritanical doctrines of Protestant Christianity so as to warrant the judgment that the latter was preached to serve the purpose.³ Although Weber's classical work has been enlisted in support of the Marxian interpretation of history, and provided the impetus for a vast literature on what may be called sociological historiology, it only shows that Protestantism was professed by the rising bourgeoisie because it was congenial to their temper and appeared to suit their economic purpose. That, however, does not prove a causal connection; nor is a similar relation between capitalist economy and Liberalism established.

Professor Tawney traces the simultaneous development of Puritanism and capitalist economy, and shows how the two influenced each other. But nowhere does he dogmatically assert that the connection was exclusive or causal. "Puritanism had its own standards of social conduct, derived partly from the obvious interests of the commercial classes, partly from its conception of the nature of God and the destiny of man. These standards were in sharp antithesis, both to the considerable surviving elements of feudalism

in English society, and to the policy of the authoritarian State, with its ideal of an ordered and graded society...Sapping the former by its influence, and overthrowing the latter by direct attack, Puritanism became a potent force in preparing the way for the commercial civilisation which finally triumphed at the Revolution."⁴

It is suggested that the social doctrines of the religious pioneers of Liberalism were partly influenced by the interests of the commercial classes, but only partly. The basic principles about the nature of God, and man's relation to him, were conceived independently of that partial influence. Religious beliefs, philosophical principles, social changes, economic developments of the same historical epoch are mutually influenced. But to attach primary importance to one of them and trace the origin of the rest to it, is evidently wrong. "While from the point of view of historical struggles and social changes, a body of doctrines can be conveniently regarded as a by-product, from the point of view of theory and of the values of human experience, it may have an importance over and above the historical conditions that brought it into being. Without going so far as to regard it as an end in itself, it is obviously something more than a by-product."⁵ That is a more realistic appreciation of the relative significance of the various factors going into the making of history. Only, it may be noted that religious doctrines and philosophical ideas can be greatly influenced by the operation of social factors, but they are never brought about by the latter, do not originate in them. They have their own history, past and future. The two histories, the history of thought and the history of social events, are in some periods so very intertwined that they cannot be easily disentangled. Hence the confusion about their genesis and interrelation.

The interrelation is correctly described by a recent constructive critic of Liberalism. "As a way of life, Liberalism reflected the intellectual, social, economic and political aspirations and ideals of the rising commercial classes. In consequence, the relationship between Liberalism and capitalism was an intimate one. But it would be a mistake to see in Liberalism only a convenient rationale for capitalism. For the liberal ideology was something more than a mere excrescence or mental reflex expression of an economic system. It was the embodiment of the seventeenth century mentality and was as much a cause as an effect of the economic system that was developing at that time out of the collapse of feudalism. It was

not simply an economic philosophy and way of life, but a political, social and intellectual philosophy and way of life as well. Liberalism and Capitalism, moreover, developed concomitantly and simultaneously. And since Capitalism is as much a system of ideas as it is a way of doing things, it was as much the product of the mentality of the rising commercial classes as the mentality was the product of the system. Both Liberalism and Capitalism are derived from the individualistic *Weltanschauung* that came into existence with the Renaissance and the Reformation.⁶

Locke was the prophet of modern Liberalism, and he attached supreme importance to property. On that authoritative evidence, Liberalism has been characterised as the philosophy of capitalist acquisitiveness. Professor Laski, for instance, asserts: "The idea of Liberalism is historically connected, in an inescapable way, with the ownership of property." But one needs only to read Locke without any prejudice to be convinced that his conception of property had little in common with the parasitic capitalist ownership of the means of production. He defined property as the product of one's own labour, and argued that man was the owner of his body, and therefore he is the owner of whatever he creates with his hands. He "hath mixed his labour with it and thus removed it out of the common estate."⁷ Locke further declared that reason, which rules supreme in the state of nature, taught "that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possession." There speaks not the philosopher of capitalist exploitation, but a prophet of Communism. Indeed, the connection between philosophical Liberalism and Communism is logical, whereas that with capitalist economy is fortuitous. By insisting upon property, Locke anticipated the socialist and genuine democratic contention that without economic security liberty is meaningless. In the political thought of his time, the concept of liberty was abstract and metaphysical. Locke put into it a concrete material content. His doctrine of property was tantamount to the socialist demand for the fruits of one's own labour. It was a message of liberation, not only for the serfs, who were not owners of their bodies, but also for the slaves of future capitalist totalitarianism. The property of Locke's conception actually included, in addition to material goods, with which one "hath mixed his labour", life itself and liberties. Therefore, he declared that civil society was established with the object of the preservation of property.

If to regard Liberalism as the ideology of the rising bourgeoisie is wrong, to trace its origin in the Reformation is an equally false reading of history. Luther's original doctrine that religion was a matter of individual conscience objectively had a liberating significance. But he did not stand for the spiritual liberation of man. Religious reform advocated by him was meant to break the power of the Pope. With that object, he invoked the power of the German Princes. Consequently, the Reformation, far from serving the cause of rising Capitalism, reinforced Feudalism and helped the rise of Nation-State under despotic monarchs. As defender of absolute monarchy, claiming to rule by divine right, Lutheranism became the greatest menace to religious freedom. Liberalism would hardly be proud of that parentage. It has been suggested that "*Babylonish Captivity*" contained the outline of a programme of political liberty. If the origin of political Liberalism is to be sought in the history of revolt inside the Christian Church, it is more noticeable in the Conciliar writers of the fifteenth century than in Reformation. Luther struggled for the freedom of the feudal Princes and the Protestant clergy. "For pure political, liberty he never cared at all. The whole bent of his mind was really in favour of secular authority. He really believed in its divine origin and in that of human inequality."⁵ The traditional Christian doctrine is that inequality in this world is the consequence of the fall from Grace. The implication is that it is unnatural. Luther believed that human inequality was providential. It is evident that the liberal political theory of democracy can find sanction rather in Catholicism than in the Reformation.

If earlier traditions are excluded, the origin of Liberalism and democratic political theory can be found in the movement for the secularisation of politics, which preceded the Reformation. So long as political authority claimed super-natural sanction, it was absolute. The idea of democratic control could arise only after the secularisation of political authority. The Reformation made a contribution to the movement for the secularisation of politics, and in that sense, it can be appraised as a contributory cause to the rise of Liberalism and Democracy. But at the same time, it represented a reaction as well. Luther's hostility to Aristotle did not weaken the hold of theology. Indeed, the Reformation ushered in an era of unprecedented bigotry, which plunged Europe in the long period of religious wars. During that period, hold of theology was

no weaker than what it was in the Middle-Ages. The result of Luther's denunciation of Aristotle was the elimination of rationalism from Protestant theology and also from politics. The authority of the Scriptures was asserted even more dogmatically than before. The process of the secularisation of politics was retarded by the practice of justifying every social institution by an appeal to the Scriptures as interpreted by Protestant casuistry. The demand for the transfer of human allegiance from the religious to the civil authority was a feature of the sixteenth century. But it was completely silenced in Calvinist countries. Lutheran Princes pretended to embody civil authority as against the spiritual power of the Pope exercised through the Catholic hierarchy; but they buttressed their civil authority on divine right. Luther justified their tyranny as divine retribution for man's sins. He never showed the least sympathy for representative institutions. The Conciliar movement was more democratic than the Reformation.

Pending the centuries of struggle for supremacy between the spiritual and temporal power, occasionally, the latter asserted itself; the struggle itself implied a claim to the independence of civil authority. The Reformation was not the successful culmination of that struggle. On the contrary, for the first time, the two powers were completely united in the Protestant Princes. Politically, the Reformation can be characterised as the restoration of theocracy. The Nation-State of the sixteenth century was a theocratic State. Even Melancthon who, compared with Luther, was certainly a Liberal, declared that there was nothing nobler than the State—the shadow of Hegel cast ahead. It was not an accident that the prophet of modern Statism belonged to the Lutheran Church.

Notwithstanding the reactionary tendencies of the Reformation, and the following period of religious intolerance, the older movement for the secularisation of political authority succeeded in the sixteenth century in laying the foundation of Liberalism. The democratic demand for representative institutions had also been raised inside the Church by the Conciliar movement. The pretension to divine right did not enable the theoretically theocratic monarchies to prevent the State developing as a secular institution; and as such, it could not be beyond the possibility of human control. The power of the Prince might be absolute; but the State was administered by fallible men who did not possess any divine right, and the King could not transfer it without forfeiting his kingship.

By challenging the validity of the ecclesiastical laws, for the conscience of the laity, Melancthon undermined the prerogative of the King to make laws on the authority of his divine right. For those laws would also be of the ecclesiastical nature. A place was made for civil laws given by secular authorities. As the culmination of the process of secularisation, the State replaced the Church as the emblem of civil society. That great revolution was theoretically justified by Richard Hooker (1553-1600), who defended the Anglican High Church against Puritanism. Suggesting for the first time that the State had its origin in a contract between the ruler and the ruled, he formulated the fundamental principles of Liberalism and democratic political theory.

The outlines of modern political theory were drawn in Hooker's *Laws of Ecclesiastical Policy*, written to combat the Calvinist demand for a union of the Church and the State, the former being the dominant factor. Hooker maintained that it was wrong to derive from the Scriptures rules of secular conduct; that God has laid down no universal precepts, but has left men free to decide their behaviour according to the expediency of time and place, always under the rule of the Law of Nature and Reason. Locke drank deep in the fountain of Hooker's wisdom and preached the philosophy of modern Liberalism. He was neither a Calvinist nor a Puritan, but an Anglican. The English Reformation had little analogy with the movement in Germany. Led by a King, its issues were purely secular. There was no theological dispute of any importance between the Church of England and the Mother church of Rome. Liberalism rose out of the Reformation in England, because its germs had sprouted in the Middle-Ages when the Catholic Church was the sanctuary of rationalist thought and progressive learning. The Reformation proper, which took place in the continent, was an interlude; it was rather a setback to the agelong striving for intellectual progress and spiritual freedom.

The most substantial contribution to the rise of Liberalism in the seventeenth century was made by the confessional disputes between monarchs and their subjects in certain parts of Europe. That new factor to disturb the unity of the mediæval Christian order resulted from the Reformation, although Germany under Luther's direct influence remained free from that fruitful disturbance, but for which "there could have been in the seventeenth century few relics of any form of popular liberty or of any check

on monarchical tyranny."⁹ The evil effect of the Reformatioun, which fortified the belief in the divine right of kings, to justify the revolt of the German Princes against the Holy Emperor, and thus sanctified the absolute power of the Princes as against their subjects, was countered in other countries by the existence of subjects who did not share the confession of the King. That situation gave birth to the most important question for the jurists and moralists of the time. Was resistance to the monarch in defence of religious liberty, the freedom of conscience, permissible? Luther as well as Calvin, together with the other leaders of the Reformation, could not conceive of any such disruptive question ever arising. They were all advocates of the monolithic Nation-State, which would not tolerate any confessional controversy any more than the least encroachment upon the absolute civil authority of the monarch. But confessional differences between subjects and the sovereign spread in the Netherlands, France and Britain, and on that foundation were formulated the principles of modern Liberalism and Democracy: Freedom of conscience, of worship, toleration, popular right to resist tyranny, so on and so forth.

The infamous massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day (1572) in France provoked the most passionate manifesto of popular liberty in the form of two memorable publications which made history. One was *Franco-Gallia* by the famous jurist Francis Hotman (1524-90). The appeal was not to civil laws sanctified by the divine right of kings, but to history, to the numerous vindications of liberty in the past ever since the time when tyrannicide was a virtue in ancient Greece. On the evidence of history, Hotman justified the right to resistance of the Estates General and other popular bodies. His book has been rightly appreciated as among the earliest treatises on modern constitutional history.

The other book, *Vindictive Contra Tyrannos*, published anonymously about the same time, was of still greater importance. It could be called the manifesto of the revolutions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The idea of an original contract was expounded in that book written before Hobbes and Locke, not to mention Rousseau, but with a very important proviso: "The people agreed to obey on condition of good government, and only on this condition." The foundation of the State presupposes surrender by the people of such parts of their natural liberty as are essential for the preservation of peace and order. The surrender, therefore,

is neither complete nor irrevocable. The Huguenot pioneer of Liberalism was more democratic than Rousseau. He exclaimed: "Is it reasonable to suppose that men who are by nature free and equal could have been so devoid of sense as to surrender and leave their property to a government except on conditions?"

But the Huguenot movement as a whole was not democratic. It was under Calvinist influence. The right of resistance claimed for communities on religious grounds was denied to individuals; the latter were enjoined to seek remedy in prayers and tears, a practice popularised by the Puritans in England. The Huguenots advocated what might be called "representative government"—the right of resistance belonged to public functionaries assembled in the Estates.

A similar tendency was represented by the Whigs in England—those pioneers of modern Liberalism. They were great landlords—the beneficiaries of Henry VIII's Reformation, and therefore loyal to the throne until Tory Erastianism compelled them to revolt against the Anglican Church. Confessional difference led them to resist the King's absolutism. They were Dissenters, not Puritans. Their politico-religious doctrines had been sarcastically described as "Puritanism and water". In the middle of the seventeenth century, John Selden (1584-1654) raised the issue of divine right of Kings versus contract between the King and the people as the source of civil authority. The conservative Liberalism of the Whig bourgeoisie was soberly expounded by that great jurist: "Kingship is divine, and based on patriarchy; yet, a King is a thing men make for their own sakes, granting privileges on condition that he guards their liberties; the moment he neglects this, the privileges are forfeit and he comes within the power of law."¹⁰

More or less similar doctrines were preached by a number of other writers, one of whom declared: "Rulers are by God's will, but are accountable to man, God creating the office, man setting its limits."¹¹ That was a far cry from Revolt of the Angels, called the Reformation. Luther entrenched monarchy in God's authority; Whig Liberalism denied God's absolutism, and, reversing the venerable dictum, declared: "God proposes, but man disposes." The relation between Liberalism and the Reformation is very tenuous indeed; and the pioneers of Liberalism in England hailed from the Whig aristocracy, whereas in Germany the Reformation served the cause not of capitalism but of the feudal Princes.

The subtle attack on the authority of God galvanised the doctrine of divine right. Robert Filmer (d. 1653) was the leading spokesman. He maintained that the origin of kingship was patriarchal or patrimonial. Treating the Bible as a sociological record, he applied historicism to politics, and regarded the origin and development of human society as natural. But with this modern method, he came to the conclusion that monarchy was the only legitimate form of State, and that the monarchist State was divine because it was natural.¹² Filmer's writings are believed to have influenced the course of the English revolution to a considerable degree. His defence of divine right was successful. "Divine right was one way of expressing obedience, orderliness, continuity; it made 1660 and 1689 bloodless revolutions and saved the throne from a bastard in 1679."¹³

On the other hand, Filmer's successful defence of reaction and apology for restoration gave an impetus to liberal political thought, to be expressed boldly by Algernon Sidney (1622-83). But the Whigs were no more democratic than the Huguenots in France. They also demanded "representative government", offering themselves as the trustees of the people. Therefore, they disowned Sidney's republicanism. They would have even less of the more intemperate Harrington. Yet, Sidney did not say anything more revolutionary than Locke did soon after him. That is yet another evidence against the view that Liberalism was formulated as the philosophy of the rising bourgeoisie, and that the needs of capitalist economy brought about the Reformation.

Sidney was neither a Whig nor a Puritan. Ridiculing Filmer, he wrote: "Protestantism and liberty will both flourish under a Popish Prince (who) taught that his will is law."¹⁴ In a vigorous style, which has been recognised as a remarkable contribution to political literature, Sidney declared: "A king who breaks the law ceases to be a king; the people can judge and depose kings; Parliament is as old as the nation; a free people may assemble when they please." That was far too revolutionary for the Whigs. Sidney was prosecuted on trumped up charges and executed under the judgement of the violent and inhuman Lord Chief Justice Jefferies who was rewarded by Charles II with a Peerage; but later killed by a furious mob. The "Glorious Revolution" even disowned Milton for his republicanism. At Oxford, the poet's political pamphlets were dedicated to the flames together with the works of other

Republicans.

While the seeds of modern Liberalism sown in the soil ploughed by Grotius, Hobbes and others were still sprouting into tender plants, to flower into the republicanism of Milton, Harrington and Sidney, ultimately to bear the fruit of Locke's philosophy, Whiggery made a compromise between the laws of God and man-made laws, between the divine right of the king and the popular right to restrict royal prerogative. The plea was that the balance should be held by those who by birth and estates were the most vitally interested in security and orderly progress, "so that the nobles should not be forced to unite with the commons to make head against the Crown." The conservative Liberalism of the Whig party as formulated by its most authoritative exponent, Daniel Defoe, paradoxically maintained that parliament had often harmed the country, but *vox populi* saved it. Who raised that voice, traditionally said to be the voice of God? The king. Defoe characterised the Crown as the emblem of the people's will, and suggested that, against a tyrannous legislature and persecuting High Church men, the Crown and the people should unite to produce the "patriotic King." Louis XIV had made the experiment successfully in France. In England it was even more successful. Incipient Liberalism remained bogged in a compromise with mediaeval prejudices until the Great Revolution shattered the illusion set up by the Glorious Revolution. Philosophical and political issues, clouded until then, were clarified by Burke's brilliance, which turned over the apple-cart of the Whig party, and gave an impetus to liberal thought, as Filmer had done for Whiggism a century earlier.

In order to trace the roots of Liberalism and democratic ideas, and to appreciate their true significance, one must not begin with any preconceived notions, but be guided by the logic of the evolution of thought, by the objectivity of the dynamics of ideas themselves. For centuries, patterns of thought had been cast in the religious mould. Modern science itself was inspired by the teleological view of a law governed Universe. Rationalism was born in the theological schools of the Middle-Ages. The origin of scepticism, the powerful solvent of faith, tradition and authority, can be traced in the scholastic disputations of learned theologians. Modern social and political ideas similarly grew out of the historical backgrounds of religious controversies and metaphysical speculations of a disinterested intellectual pursuit. The specula-

tions of the sixteenth century about the origin of civil society not only undermined Christianity by an implicit rejection of the Biblical doctrine; but also laid down the foundation of Liberalism and democratic political theory. The notion of contract is much older than Rousseau, Locke or Hobbes. It rose out of the background of the "theological age" of the sixteenth century. Indeed, it was suggested by earlier medieval writers. "Religion alone gave the leverage to liberty which otherwise would have perished in the development of the central power."¹⁵

The theoretical justification of monarchist absolutism was provided by the earlier attempts (of Marsiglio, Bodin and Machiavelli) for the secularisation of the civil power. It was reinforced by the Reformation, which preached the divine right of kings. Democratisation of politics resulted from the revolt of religious minorities against the Erastian tendency of absolute monarchs. In the sixteenth century, the tyranny of the centralised civil power (monarchist Nation-States) was so overwhelming that any resistance could not possibly be organised except by an appeal to conscience, by making it a religious duty to revolt against tyrants. That is why *Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos* was such a powerful contribution to the literature of the epoch. It raised such questions as: (a) whether or not subjects are in duty bound to obey their rulers when their commands are contrary to the law of God; and (b) whether or not it be lawful to resist a ruler who is purposing to abrogate the law of God? It is evident that the voice raised in the sixteenth century against religious persecution heralded not only the Puritan revolt of the seventeenth century, but also the Great Revolution of the eighteenth.

"It was only religious earnestness, the confessional conflicts and the persecuting spirit of the sixteenth century that kept alive political liberty, and saved it from a collapse more universal than that which befell republican ideals at the beginning of the Roman Empire."¹⁶

Eventually, the doctrine of natural law was opposed to the tyranny of monarchist centralism, which had followed feudal anarchy. As revived in the sixteenth century, that ancient doctrine tended towards secular rationalism. The assumption of an original contract based upon the doctrine came to be the starting point of democratic political philosophy. A doctrine so very full of a subversive significance and revolutionary potentialities, nevertheless,

was endorsed by famous ecclesiastical writers like Althusius and Hooker. Althusius held the sixteenth century view of the State; it was omnipotent and holy, allowing no independence to the ecclesiastical authority; he was an Erastian. Indeed, his conception of the State was mediaeval; there was no room for the individual; it was a State of the Esates—a confederation of communities. It was a patriarchal hierarchic conception. Yet, Althusius held that the civil government was based on a contract, and the people as a whole was the supreme authority. It was, indeed a totalitarian conception of democracy; but so was Rousseau's; and totalitarian implication has been the curse of modern democracy. The sixteenth century ecclesiast, however, was more democratic than the eighteenth century prophet of democracy. According to Althusius, sovereignty was inalienable; it always remained with the people. Closer to Locke than to Rousseau. Althusius, therefore, is to be regarded as a pioneer of Liberalism.¹⁷

Hooker discovered a divine sanction for democracy in his conception of the Natural Law. If kings ruled by divine right, the sovereignty of the people was also of divine origin. Religion provided the most powerful weapon to combat monarchist absolutism; it was, indeed, a leverage of liberty. "Her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world; all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, the greatest as not exempted from her power; both angels and men and all creatures of whatever condition so ever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent admiring her as the mother of their joy and peace."¹⁸

Tracing the roots of Liberalism and democratic ideas, one could go still farther back in history. The notion of contract is as old as history. Leaving the prehistory of the Old Testament out of account, the idea of original contract can be traced in Greek philosophy, Roman Laws and the theological literature of the Middle-Ages. The Stoic conception of individuals as moral entities was taken over by Christianity. It proclaimed the equality of men because of the common possession of souls, which unified them in a universal moral order. The latter being rational, teleologically conceived, men were also endowed with Reason, which enabled them to restrain passions and evil emotions. The faith of Christianity could not penetrate the world of Hellenic culture unless it was enriched by the latter's legacy of rationalism. Christian theology

inherited its mysticism from Plato, rationalism from Aristotle and morality from the Stoics.

Nevertheless, the individuality and equality of men proclaimed by Christianity, being gifts of a super-human power, ultimately man was not free—either to will or to create or to legislate. Human will was good inasmuch as it was an expression of the Divine Will; otherwise, it was the voice of Satan. Man could create only as an agent of God. In short, men were individual moral entities of equal worth only in the eyes of God; they realised their intrinsic merit through complete surrender to God, by Grace. For the practical purposes of life, they were mere illusions. But the boundless faith of the Christian Middle-Ages was based on Reason, and that was the saving grace, because of which Christian thought was the harbinger of modern Liberalism.

The "Renaissance of the twelfth century" was an intellectual ferment in the world of Christian faith. The ancient heritage of reason served as the catalyst. The Nominalists were the forerunners of the revolt of man in the fifteenth century. The germs of modern Liberalism can be detected in the religious revolt of the thirteenth century against Papal Absolutism. Speaking on behalf of the "Spirituals" of the Franciscan Order, William of Occam defended the right of a persecuted minority against constituted authority. He appealed in the name of conscience and liberty. He raised the question of the right of minorities to resist coercion. He preached secularism by holding that the Emperor's power was not a gift of the Pope; but at the same time, he would not grant absolute power to the Emperor. He maintained that the Emperor derived his authority from the "College of Electors." A broader democratic franchise could not possibly be conceived in those days. In the fourteenth century, European society was organised within the framework of the Church. Notwithstanding the struggle for centuries, the temporal power was still subordinated to the spiritual, which reigned supreme. But democratic ideas and institutions grew out of the prolonged struggle for reform of the Church government. How to curb the absolutism of the Pope was the political problem of the age.

Early in the fourteenth century, Marsiglio of Padua (c. 1275-1342), that early advocate of secularism, and harbinger of the Renaissance, argued that the Pope and the Church hierarchy, being human, should not be permitted to pass the final judgment on the dis-

puted articles of faith. He suggested an elected General Council in which inspiration would consult Reason to provide for the guidance of all, the clergy as well as the laity, an authoritative interpretation of the Divine Law.¹⁹ The democratic idea of a General Council was taken up by William of Occam, (c. 1275-1342) who pleaded that the Church government should be constitutionalised by setting up a council which, representing the clergy as well as laymen, would be a body of Christian scholarship (reason) and faith. The General Council which came to be a powerful institution during the two following centuries was the forerunner of modern Parliaments; the two great monastic orders—Dominicans and Franciscans were the constitutional props of the General Council, they themselves being democratically constituted internally. Those highly significant political results followed from the purely intellectual struggle for the freedom of enquiry and judgment inside Christian society.

The Conciliar movement can be called the school of early political education. Its theory was clearly democratic; it demanded that the Church government, the only government of the time, must be representative, on the ground that the whole body of the Church, including the faithful congregation of laymen, was the source of its law, the Pope and the hierarchy being mere public servants. The Church was identical with the entire community, and the sovereign power rested in the whole body. The logical implication of the theory was very disruptive for Papal absolutism; nevertheless, it was boldly pointed out by Occam. That the General Council could depose the Pope, was a matter of common agreement. John Wycliffe (c.1329-1384) and John Hus (1373-1415) were the heralds of modern democracy, and the heretical movement which shook the structure of the mediaeval Christian social order was revolutionary. It clearly brought out the political implications of the Church movement.

The doctrine of the divine right of kings, which reinforced by the Reformation, enabled monarchist absolutism nearly to kill democracy at its birth, was a conception of the early democratic thought. It was first preached by Wycliffe, the leader of the English peasant revolt, and the inspirer of the heretical movement all over Europe. He declared that the king was the Vicar of God. That was a bold challenge to the power of the Pope; and democracy rose out of the struggle against Papal Absolutism. With the doc-

trine of the divine right, the temporal power was opposed to the spiritual power. Secularisation of politics was the condition for its democratisation. Wycliffe preached that in the affairs of this world, the royal power was of greater dignity than that of the clergy; and therefore the king had the right and the duty to remedy the abuses of the Church government.

As far back as 1433, Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464) expounded fully the democratic implication of the Conciliar theory, so that the coming menace of monarchist absolutism was also challenged. On the authority of the common law, he maintained that no law, civil or ecclesiastical, royal proclamation or Papal decretal, was binding unless approved and accepted by the community for which it was given. Cusa heralded the democratic doctrines of Natural Law and natural equality of men, conceived and developed only in and after the sixteenth century, when he declared that the king should obey the law, because the law made the king.²⁰

The notions of equality and fraternity can be discovered even in earlier times. The peasant revolts at the close of the Middle-Ages were inspired by those ideals, preached by early Christianity. And Liberalism can be traced back all the way to Greek rationalism. Secularisation of politics resulted from the doctrine of the divine right of kings, and the movement for secularisation produced democratic ideas challenging the established order, monarchist as well as sacerdotal. Marsiglio of Padua, a contemporary of Occam, raised the first significant voice demanding secularisation of the civil authority. The philosophical basis of the political theory expounded by him was clearly of the Aristotelian tradition, inherited through the Arab rationalist Averroes. Marsiglio actually believed that his *Defensor Pacis* was a supplement to Aristotle's *Politics*. But except for the naturalist and rationalist point of departure, there was very little in common between the two; and that was the point of departure also of the modern liberal and democratic thought heralded by the mediaeval jurist when he declared: "Human law is a command of the whole body of citizens, arising directly from the deliberation of those empowered to make law, about voluntary acts of human beings to be done or avoided in this world, for the sake of attaining the best end in this world."²¹ The case for the separation of reason and faith, pleaded by the Nominalists ever since the Renaissance of the

twelfth century, provided not only the theoretical foundation for the demand of the independence of secular authority, but also for its democratisation. In the passage quoted above, Marsiglio expounded the doctrine of representative government.

Thus born in the bosom of the church, and also in the revolt against the mediaeval religious social order, the germs of liberal and democratic thought found a clearer expression in the various doctrines of Natural Law and the origin of civil society developed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Heralded by a long succession of pioneers, it was eventually given the form of a system of philosophy by John Locke. In Britain, Locke's immediate predecessor was Hooker, who summarised in his *Ecclesiastical Polity* the entire tradition of mediaeval political thought as represented by Thomas Aquinas.

Though its roots are thus ramified in past history, and can be traced through the Middle-Ages all the way back to Aristotle, modern liberal and democratic thought as it was formulated and elaborated in the seventeenth century contained entirely new elements. Secularism was its most distinctive feature, which was derived from the resurgence of science and the resulting philosophical revolution. At the close of the Middle-Ages, the problem of the imaginary relation between God and man, which for so many centuries had been the main concern of speculative thought, was replaced by a growing interest in the problems of the relation between man and man. Secularisation of politics was the condition for its unreserved democratisation, and Humanism laid down the foundation of true Liberalism. The decline of Liberalism after it had reached the high-water mark in the eighteenth century was due to the fact that originally, as formulated by Locke, its secularism did not go far enough; it was anti-clerical, but not irreligious; its Humanism was not naturalist in the scientific sense, but inclined towards natural religion; its rationalism, though not teleological was yet metaphysical; it placed reason in man, but conceived it not as a part of his biological being, but as the function of something transcendental; finally, its recoil from romanticism implied rejection of secular humanist ethics, and relapse into religion in search of a transcendental sanction for morality.

While the rich tradition of scholastic rationalism and of the struggle against Papal Absolutism and for democratisation of the Church government contributed considerably to the development

of Liberalism and democratic political theories, it resulted directly from the secularisation of philosophy, the deposition of theology from the proud position of the queen of sciences, and the turning of the human mind from the vain speculation about an after-world to the problems of life on this earth. Though Machiavelli and Hobbes have rightly gone down in history as the creators of the theory of the modern secular State, the philosophical undercurrent, the process of the spiritual liberation of man, began with Marsiglio of Padua and culminated in Hobbes. John Locke is generally recognised as the philosopher of Liberalism. But that historical distinction belongs also to Spinoza, who was a greater philosopher. As political theorists, both were disciples of Hobbes. Philosophically, Spinoza stood nearer to the master; therefore, his political theory was more uncompromisingly democratic. Locke's Liberalism remained largely under Hooker's influence, and because of that could not break away completely from the religious tradition. Helvetius and Condillac rid it of the weakness; but in the post-revolutionary period, English Liberalism cast off the revolutionary influence of the Enlightenment, and reverted to the religio-conservative tradition of Locke.

The philosophical foundation of Liberalism was laid by Hobbes, because in him political thought was secularised without any reservation. He was the first to go to the roots of the baffling problem of the relation between the civil and sacerdotal authorities, between the State and religion. What is of still greater importance, is that Hobbes was the first to realise that a clear and unambiguous definition of sovereignty was the condition for a solution of the problem which had for centuries confused a long succession of learned ecclesiasts, clever jurists and speculative philosophers. The fundamental principle of Hobbes' theory of sovereignty is that there is no difference between the sovereign and the people; the two are identical. It is true that Hobbes appears to identify the people with the sovereign. But a closer examination reveals the democratic essence of the theory. It is a double-edged sword.

Assuming that sovereignty belonged to the king, either by divine right or because of the original compact, the lawyers of the Tudor period exercised their ingenuity to devise constitutional limitations to the king's prerogative. Hobbes exposed the fallacy of the superficial approach to the problem of sovereignty. If sove-

reignty was derived from divine right, how could it ever be limited by man-made laws? And, on the other hand, all who claimed to hold sovereign power as per the original compact, king or the Parliament or the protector, had in practice transgressed the supposed limitations. All these conflicts and contradictions were bound to arise unless sovereignty was conceived as expression of the people's will. That evidently is a democratic theory. Hobbes could dispose of the divine right of kings, because his theory of sovereignty was unreservedly secular, and therefore, it was also democratic. "Temporal and spiritual are two words brought into the world to make man see double, and mistake their lawful sovereign. A man cannot obey two masters, and a house divided against itself cannot stand. Seeing there are no men on earth whose bodies are spiritual, there can be no spiritual Commonwealth among men that are yet in the flesh."²²

The king appeared prominently in Hobbes' definition of sovereignty; but the reference, in the last analysis, was clearly not to a personal ruler. It was to the general will of the community. "The face is the face of a Stuart King, but the voice is the voice of a Commonwealth."²³ Sovereignty results from the transfer of "the natural right of all to everything"; these rights, therefore are the source of sovereignty. They need not necessarily be transferred to the king. Hobbes assumed that originally it was so; therefore, he identified sovereignty with the Crown. But nowhere did he say that the "natural; rights of all to everything" could not be transferred differently to give rise to an alternative symbol of sovereignty. The crucial point is the origin of sovereign power; Hobbes is quite clear on that point: it is the community.

Hobbes' approach to the question of sovereignty was entirely original. For the first time, a political theory was deduced from fundamental principles. Since the time of St. Augustine, political theories had been deduced from the Scriptures. Politics was a part of religion, and as such dominated by theology. No earlier secularist, neither Marsiglio nor Bodin, could get out of the vicious circle. Machiavelli tried; but he was no philosopher. His political doctrines lacked depth. They rather prescribed rules of political practice, which were vitiated by cynicism. Hobbes deduced his doctrine of sovereignty "from the principles of nature only." He freed political philosophy from theology, and detached the early democratic movement from the religious prejudices of the Reformation.

"None went to the root of the matter, as Hobbes did. Men took refuge in one despotic form after another. Through the welter of fog and darkness, the trenchant theory of the *Leviathan* cuts its ruthless way like a blast of the north wind. It is clear-sighted where others were blind; consistent where others were confused, single in aim where others were entangled in contradictions. The mid-seventeenth century was a great creative time, but creation had hardly got beyond the stage of chaos. Hobbes saw better than anyone from what quarters of the sky light was to come."²⁴

The supreme importance of Hobbes' political theory was that it was expounded as an integral part of a philosophy, which was vigorously rationalistic and as such completely free from all religious and theological prejudices. The States ceased to be shrouded in metaphysical mysteries. Hobbes' philosophy embraced the entire scheme of the Universe, explained in terms of geometry and mechanics. Psychology and physiology were shown as biological processes in the context of a mechanistic cosmology. In between, there came society, described as the most complex of all bodies, formed according to, and governed by, natural laws. The entire scheme of the Universe, including man with his body, mind and soul, was self-contained, and therefore independent of any outside influence, control or guidance. The great revolt of man against spiritual slavery reached the climax in Hobbes's philosophy; as the charter of human freedom, it laid down the foundations of Liberalism and Democracy.

The fear, anger and hatred which Hobbes' philosophy provoked on all sides proved that it did not represent the interest of any class; Liberalism was not the ideology of the bourgeoisie. It proved that ideas develop according to their own logic. The profoundly revolutionary philosophy of Hobbes was opposed with equal vehemence by the ecclesiasts, royalists, puritans and also by the rising bourgeoisie. "Instinctively, all, of whatever creed, felt that there was an enemy. Hobbes' doctrines were denounced as pernicious to all nations, destructive of royal titles, an encouragement to usurpers, unhistorical, unscriptural, immoral." Hobbes was "an Epicurean, a Cromwellian, foe of conscience, and religion, and an atheist." From the point of view of the rising bourgeoisie, he was regarded as "the foe of property, an enemy of chartered companies, corporations and trade."²⁵

The conventional view that Hobbes was the theoretical apolo-

gist of monarchist absolutism is contradicted by the fact that Charles II is reported to have applied to him the Biblical description. "His hand against every man, and every man's hand against him." The leader of the Royalist Party, Clarendon, said that the *Leviathan* was written to please Cromwell; and he was not far from being right, because Hobbes did not make a secret of it that his views were valid for any de facto government. Only, as one of the greatest iconoclasts of all times, Hobbes was no more an apologist of the Anglican Clarendon than a flatterer of the Puritan Cromwell. But in so far as the Cromwellian cause was democratic, it could find support in Hobbes' philosophy which exposed the venerable fiction of the divine right of kings.

As a bold pioneer, Hobbes was far ahead of his time. No section of the contemporary society could accept his philosophy. It was a philosophy of the future, and was not appreciated until the nineteenth century. But if Whiggism was "Puritanism and water", the philosophical Radicalism of the nineteenth century was Hobbesian rationalism plus piety. Liberalism had grown out of the movement of ideas in the Middle-Ages. It was not a creation of the bourgeoisie. But eventually, the latter found it suitable for their social purpose and adopted it.

The credit of laying down a solid philosophical foundation of modern Liberalism really belongs to Hobbes, because in no other political doctrine of the time is the basic principle of individualism so clearly stated. Hobbes held that nature had made men essentially equal in faculties both of body and of mind. The attempt to create a political philosophy independent of theology led to a pragmatic approach to the problems of jurisprudence, civil government and social relations. That tendency culminated in the utilitarianism of the philosophical Radicals of the nineteenth century. It was a hand-to-mouth policy which really solved no problem. It established the English tradition of glorifying make-shifts into conventions, a jumble of which, in course of time, was given the validity of a constitution. Upon the welcome liberation from the thralldom of theology, the pendulum of political thought in Britain swung to the other extreme. It became an article of faith that, human nature being incalculable, political thinking could not be strictly logical.

Hobbes had introduced rationalism in politics. The uncompromising secularism of his general philosophy enabled him to make

this great contribution to political thought, and thereby make a political philosophy possible. He regarded reason as inherent in the biological being of man,²⁶ and with a rigorous logic deduced a whole political philosophy from that premise. Human nature is composed of reason and desire; all impetus to human action results from the latter, while the former functions as the regulating factor. Natural Law is "the dictate of Right reason, conversant about those things which are either to be done or committed for the constant preservation of life and members...."²⁷ Reason forbids man to do "that which is destructive of his life; and not to omit that by which he thinketh it may be best preserved."²⁸ This fundamental hypothesis of Hobbes' political philosophy also indicated the possibility of a secular psychology. Reason and instinct (desire) are not antagonistic; both being biological properties, the origin of neither is transcendental nor is shrouded in mystery. Fruits of human creativeness result from the cooperation of the two basic urges. A secular rationalism and a scientific (as against speculative) psychology logically deduced therefrom were the twin-pillars which supported the imposing structure of a political philosophy.

Grotius had heralded rationalism by freeing the ancient doctrine of the Natural Law from its traditional association with theology. He had gone to the extent of suggesting the possibility of a mechanistic interpretation of nature, detached from the idea of God. Yet, his rationalism retained a large measure of metaphysical teleology, which was a characteristic feature of the naturalist philosophy generally of the seventeenth century. Though divorced from the theological tradition, the Natural Law was a teleological conception. It was completely revolutionised by Hobbes. There are no immutable laws written in nature. The whole system of nature, including man, is a chain of causes and effects. Becoming conscious of this relation, man discovers the Natural Law. "The law of nature is a dictate of right reason."²⁹ "A law of nature is a precept, or a general rule, found out by reason."³⁰ The twentieth century science corroborates the subjective rationalist view of the Law of Nature as anticipated by Hobbes three-hundred years ago.

It was an integral Naturalism that Hobbes preached. In it, the dichotomy between man and nature disappears. Man is a part of nature, and nature is a rational process. Man's spiritual liberation is complete. The Humanism of the Renaissance becomes scientific Naturalism in Hobbes' philosophy, to lay down the foundation

of liberal thought and democratic practice.

The principle of individualism is logically deduced, on the one hand, from the naturalist Humanism of Hobbes' philosophy and, on the other hand, from his rationalist doctrine of the origin of society. All other theories about the foundation of society were either based upon the theological or teleological conception of Natural Law, or postulated an *ad hoc* compact. The one ruled out the possibility of a humanist philosophy based upon the principle of individualism; the other destroyed democracy at its birth: The basic biological urge of self-preservation compelled the realisation of the necessity of individuals combining in the struggle for existence. Reason, also a biological function, dictated certain rules for the governance of the community, and regulation of the relations of its constituent individuals. The rise of the community does not mean abdication of the individual. It is created by individuals to serve their respective self-interest more effectively.

Any political philosophy presupposes a definite view of human nature. Starting from the view that human nature is selfish, in the sense that self-preservation is the basic biological urge, and that the very selfishness gives birth to reason, Hobbes constructed a political philosophy which maintains that to promote the growth of the individuality of its members is the function of a social organisation; and thanks to its rational individualism the political philosophy of Hobbes, logically, if not explicitly, lays down the most solid theoretical foundation of democracy.

"Hobbes was at once the complete utilitarian and the complete individualist. The power of the State and the authority of the law are justified only because they contribute to the security of individual human beings, and there is no rational ground of obedience and respect for authority except the anticipation that these will yield a larger individual advantage than their opposites. Society is merely an artificial body, a collective term for the fact that human beings find it individually advantageous to exchange goods and services. It is this clear-cut individualism which makes Hobbes' philosophy the most revolutionary theory of the age."³¹

Assuming that Hobbes was an apologist of absolutism, which is not true, the most rigorous rationalism of his philosophy could only serve the cause of Liberalism and Democracy.³² Hobbes' philosophy is a classical instance of ideas unfolding themselves by their own logic with no causal connection with the context of social

events. The development of European thought towards rationalism, naturalism and secularism was an unbroken process from the Renaissance of the twelfth century to Hobbes. Liberalism was a continuation of that process.

The progressive implications of the philosophy of Hobbes were set forth clearly by Locke to become the principles of Liberalism. Though he disagreed with Hobbes on purely philosophical questions, that is to say, as regards scientific Naturalism, and was more in sympathy with pious Hooker, Locke nevertheless followed Hobbes in detaching Liberalism from the tradition of the Reformation. He deprecated the practice of quoting Scriptures in controversies about the source of civil authority. Indeed, he rejected the appeal to any authority. "We cannot see by other man's eye; masters take men off the use of their judgment."

Born of a Puritan family, Locke went to Oxford. Repelled by the intolerance of Presbyterianism as well as by the fantacism of the Independents, who dominated the ancient seat of learning, young Locke lost enthusiasm for the parental confession. Thereafter, he came under the influence of the liberal divines of the Anglican Church. In the light of his relation with Hooker, the inspiration of his demand for moral restraint on power can be traced in the tradition of Thomas Aquinas and other mediaeval political thinkers. Yet, Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* logically related with, if not consciously deduced from, Hobbes's mechanistic psychology, went to feed the eighteenth century French philosophy which was rooted in the Epicurean tradition of Montaigne, the subjective rationalism of Descartes and the devastating irony and subtle criticism of Bayle. Scepticism had undermined authority. Man's faith in the super-natural had been shaken. Hobbes' philosophy of scientific Naturalism and Locke's psychology of sensation, logically related with it, gave man a new faith—the faith in himself, that was the core of Liberalism.

Man has natural rights which can be discovered by right reason. To protect those rights is the function of law and the purpose of its administration. Voluntary submission to law, discovered by right reason and made for common benefit, meant surrender of the natural rights. But the origin of social compact did not preclude retention of civil liberties to be defended, if necessary, by revolt against the sovereign power. Requiring some inevitable surrender of natural rights, civil government is an evil, and therefore

its power and function must be strictly limited. These are the principles of political Liberalism. They are supported by the philosophical proposition that man's reason is the highest law; no law can be binding which is opposed to right reason.

It is evident that Liberalism must stand or fall with the concept of reason. The appeal to reason is an old story; but reason was placed either outside the human being or beyond human comprehension. As a court of appeal veiled in mystery, it could not improve man's position. Reason had to be conceived as a human property—a biological function, before it could be the symbol of the liberation of man. Such a conception of reason presupposes scientific knowledge, which in the seventeenth century was still inadequate for the purpose. Nevertheless, it could be logically deduced from hypothetical premises. Hobbes did that to lay down the foundation of modern Liberalism.

NOTES

1. Harold J. Laski, *The Rise of European Liberalism*.
2. A.L. Rowse, *The End of an Epoch*, Chapter on the Rise of Liberalism."
3. Max Weber, *Protestant Ethics and the Rise of Capitalism*.
4. R.H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*.
5. A.L. Rowse, *The End of an Epoch*.
6. John H. Hallowe, *The Decline of Liberalism as an Ideology*.
7. Locke, *Two Treatises on Government*.
8. *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. II.
9. *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. III.
10. W. Selden, *Table Talks*.
11. J. Ware, *The Privileges of the People*.
12. R. Filmer, *Patriarcha Non Monarcha*.
13. *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. VI.
14. Algernon Sidney, *Works*, edited by J. Robertson.
15. J.N. Figgis, in *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. III.
16. *Ibid*.
17. Vide J. Althusius, *Politics*.
18. Richard Hooker, *Ecclesiastical Polity*.
19. *Defensor Pacis*.
20. Nicholas Cusa, *De Concoordinatia Catholica*.
21. Marsiglio de Padua, *Defensor Pacis*.
22. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*.

23. *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. VI.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*
26. "True Reason is no less a part of human nature than any other faculty or affection of the mind. True Reason is a certain law:" *De Cive*.
27. "By right Reason in the natural stage of man, I understand not an infallible faculty, but the art of reasoning, that is, the peculiar and true ratiocination of every man concerning those actions of his which may either redound to the damage or benefit of his neighbours." (*Ibid.*)
28. *Leviathan*.
29. *De Cive*.
30. *Leviathan*.
31. G.H. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory*.
32. "It was a dangerous innovation to appeal to reason (the attempt to settle the controversy between the king and the people by logical deductions from abstract assumptions) for the justification of despotism. To do so was to acknowledge the authority of a tribunal whose verdict was likely to be adverse." (*Cambridge Modern History* Vol. VIII.)

Chapter XVI

FALLACIES OF LIBERALISM

Napoleon could not cross the English Channel; but the impact of the Great Revolution reached Britain in the form of the Radical doctrines preached by Thomas Paine, William Godwin and others, to provoke the outburst of Edmund Burke. *The Reflexions on the French Revolution* was a broadside against the eighteenth century—the age of reason. Burke vehemently denied that reason could ever be the right basis of politics. To denounce the French Revolution, he borrowed his arguments from its prophet. Rousseau had glorified mystic moral sentiments, the feelings of religious reverence and communal loyalty as against reason. Burke maintained that all those noble sentiments could be welded together into a "deeper wisdom" which should be preferred to "mere logical clarity" as the guiding principle of politics and of life generally. Rousseau's romanticism rationalised by Kant, was still to be woven into the Hegelian political philosophy with its metaphysical conception of the State. Taking full advantage of Hume's nihilistic scepticism, Burke anticipated Hegel in heralding the "inner spirit of the nation" as the source of law. An ungrateful disciple of Rousseau; Burke built a bridge between Hume's rigorous logic of anti-rationalism and Hegel's pan-logism. Reason is not an individual property; human behaviour is determined by sentiments, emotions, respect for tradition, loyalty to the community. These are not irrational; they represent the process of a gradual unfoldment of reason implicit in the consciousness of the race or the nation. At the same time, Burke defiantly denied that society was natural, and maintained that it was an artificial creation; and that it was impelled by obscure instincts and properties.

Curiously enough, Burke affirmed that his irrationalism, nega-

tion of individualism and mystic nationalism were deduced from Locke's philosophy. And there was a good deal of truth in his assertion. In fact, the contradictions of Locke's Liberalism—contradictions between the mediaeval tradition inherited through Hooker and Hobbes's scientific rationalism—were brought out clearly by Burke. While he gave the Tories a philosophy, Burke also pleaded for empiricism in politics, and political pragmatism; the principle of utility came to be the first article of faith of nineteenth century Liberalism.

Burke was the brain of the Whig party; his defection plunged conservative Liberalism into a deep crisis. A considerable section of the Whig aristocracy followed Burke over to the Tory camp, and the Radicalism of the supporters of the Great Revolution tended to go beyond the limits of classical Liberalism.

Burke not only preached the cult of irrationalism glorified as wisdom but also supported the corollary thereto, a demand for the restoration of religion. In this, he could also invoke Locke's authority. His attack on the principles of the Great Revolution and derision of the idea of democracy provoked a campaign of political pamphleteering which brought about a regeneration of Liberalism. One of the radical defenders of the principles of the Great Revolution, Jeremy Bentham, went back to Hobbes, and on the basis of his naturalistic rationalism reformulated liberal doctrines as what came to be known as philosophical Radicalism.

The campaign was opened by a school mistress, Mary Wollstonecraft, who was to be the wife of Godwin and mother of Mary Shelly, the second wife of the poet. Hers was a passionate appeal to reason: "You have a mortal antipathy to reason, but if there is anything like argument or first principle in your wild declamations, behold the result—that we are to reverence the rust of antiquity, and those unnatural customs which ignorance and self-interest have consolidated into the sage fruit of experience."¹—the first and the most thoughtful, though intensely passionate, of the thirty-eight replies to Burke's tirade against the ideas and ideals of the eighteenth century. Wollstonecraft's vindication of human rights was an emphatic reaffirmation of the revolutionary principles of Liberalism. It was of the classical French style of the eighteenth century. It almost succeeded in harmonising the moral fervour of Rousseau with Voltaire's caustic sarcasm. It was a fullblast onslaught on authority and a defiant revolt against

religion. Anticipating biological discoveries of the twentieth century, Mary Wollstonecraft subjected Burke's platitudes to a merciless analysis and exposed their absurdity.

"What do you mean by the moral constitution of the heart? And inborn sentiments? What moral purpose can be answered by extolling the good dispositions when these good dispositions are described as instincts? For an instinct moves in a direct line to its ultimate end, and asks for no guidance or support. But if virtue is to be acquired by experience or taught by example reason perfected by reflection must be the director of the whole host of passions. Reason must hold the rudder or let the wind blow where it listeth."²

Thomas Paine, Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809) and William Godwin followed in quick succession. Paine was the heart and soul of the Radical movement. He breathed the spirit of the Great Revolution. "Lay then the axe to the root and teach governments humanity."³ But it was not the mystic romanticism of Rousseau that Paine preached. His democracy was not totalitarian; it was humanist. And he was fully imbued with the secularism of the Encyclopedists. "Vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyranny."⁴

The creed of Radicalism enunciated with passionate eloquence in the earlier books of Wollstonecraft and Paine, was expounded in a sober language by James Mackintosh. He condemned Burke's emphasis on "precedents deduced from the good old days" as "apology for conservatism," and pleaded: "We should pay more attention to reason and justice, and less to tradition and custom."⁵ Mackintosh looked upon the French Revolution as a more complete application of the principles of Locke and the English Whigs of 1688. The revolutionists, he argued, were applying the principles which had been worked out by the philosophers of Europe during the preceding century. The relation between their doctrines and politics was analogous to the relation between geometry and mechanics. The *Rights of Man* was a set of fundamental moral principles.

William Godwin was the philosopher of Radicalism. His parentage goes beyond the eighteenth century Encyclopedists—to the moralists of earlier times. His ideas, therefore, tended to transcend the limits of Liberalism, and his vision was turned upon an ideal which lay beyond the liberal democratic State—on a com-

munist social order. A consistent elaboration of Liberalism, Godwin's philosophy clearly pointed towards Socialism. In him, the ideology of the bourgeoisie logically evolved into the revolutionary philosophy of the proletariat, proving that the characterisation of neither is true. Godwin held that the institution of private property was the root of all social evils. But he believed that the desired social revolution would be brought about by a change of public opinion. Counting upon the intrinsic rationality of human nature, he visualised a psychological and moral revolution rather than any violent transformation of the established political and social institutions. He was the ideal revolutionary, who could at least in imagination, temper romanticism with reason.

In its earlier stages, modern scientific enquiry, particularly in the field of mathematics, astronomy and physics, was closely associated with philosophical speculation. Newton called physics natural philosophy. Interpreted by Voltaire, it developed into the mechanistic naturalism of the eighteenth century. But the post-revolutionary liberal thought broke away from secularism, and tended to profess a pantheistic natural religion. In England, the Dissenters opposed it to the orthodoxy of the High Church as also to the tradition of Puritan bigotry. Associated with a pantheistic cosmology, reason was metaphysically conceived; the nineteenth century liberal rationalism thus expressed itself in the belief in a pantheistic moral order. That was not only a long way from the rational order of nature of the seventeenth century philosophy, but also a break with the tradition of scientific naturalism. Indeed, it was a relapse all the way back into the teleological rationalism of the Stoics, which had been taken over by the Protestant Christian Jurists as the metaphysical sanction for the laws of the Lutheran and Calvinist national States.⁶ In the last analysis, the Christian dogma of original sin persists in this system of thought: the metaphysical moral order is rational because reason imposes restrictions on the natural inclinations of man. Neither reason nor morality is inherent in human beings; both result from the sense of obligation. The concept of conscience, therefore, occupies the centre of the system. It is the dictate of Reason.

In the context of the transcendental and teleological system of thought, the liberal doctrine of individual liberty was bound to stultify itself, and be vulgarised in practice. The post-revolutionary revolt against reason had placed a high premium on the idea of

free will; the concept of individual freedom had been carried to the extent of irresponsibility; the ideal of freedom had thus appeared to deny morality. A reaction to that romantic extravagance, nineteenth century Liberalism held that human freedom and a rational order of nature were reconciled by the rule of impersonal laws discovered by Reason. The law was objective and just. The contention was that the rule of such laws did not curtail individual freedom; it only implied the acceptance of certain eternal truths and values which distinguished human beings from the lower animals. The distinctive human faculty of conscience gives birth to the sense of obligation under law. Therefore, a liberal democratic social organisation would be free as well as moral, its laws being deduced from the just law of the moral order of nature.

The dangerous possibility of freedom becoming licence thus obviated by the doctrine of impersonal laws, Liberalism summarised its social philosophy and political theory in the phrase *laissez faire et laissez passer*. The more popular first part of the liberal dictum was predicted on the second, *le monde va de lui-meme*, by the French Physiocrats on the authority of the mechanistic cosmology and secular rationalism of the seventeenth century.

As the final cause of its mechanistic cosmology, Newtonian natural philosophy had, indeed, postulated a God; but he was *ex machina*. The mechanism, once set in motion, ran by itself. Although this cosmological conception was further developed by British physicists, in the nineteenth century, contemporary liberal philosophers deviated from scientific naturalism to relapse into the Stoic doctrine of a metaphysical moral order as interpreted by Protestant theology. God did not remain outside the mechanism of nature. The anthropomorphic conception of the Final Cause was replaced by pantheism. The order of nature was a moral order because God, conceived as the sum total of the final truth and eternal values, was immanent in it. The purpose of human existence was to be free to live in harmony with the moral order. The purpose is fulfilled through the control of evil passions inherent in human nature, by conscience, that is to say, the sense of moral obligation. With nineteenth century Liberalism, *laissez faire et laissez passer* ceased to be a dictum deduced from the mechanistic naturalism of science; it was a doctrine of pantheistic teleology. The conception of a secular rational order—of a law-governed Universe—was replaced by a rationalised faith in a Providence.

It is the best of all possible worlds; it is as it is, because it could not be different. The dogma of predetermination crept imperceptibly into the liberal rationalism of the nineteenth century, to reduce the principle of individual liberty to a legal fiction.

In practice, the liberal doctrine of *laissez faire* served the purpose of rising Capitalism; and the rule of law came to be the rule of a minority which under the given circumstances had the power to make laws. Liberalism appeared to provide a moral justification of the economic exploitation of man by man and a philosophical sanction for the modern political theories which subordinated the individual to the State. Green as well as Bosanquet introduced into Liberalism the Hegelian metaphysical theory of State.

The post-revolutionary political reaction and considerations of capitalist economy, of course, influenced liberal thought as it developed in the nineteenth century. But the fundamental cause of the deviation from its original principles of rationalism and individualism was inherent in the ambiguities and contradictions of Locke's philosophy.

Locke's theory of human understanding was based upon the rationalist psychology of Hobbes. But he was not as completely free from religious prejudices as his predecessor was. Hobbes had traced the origin of society and principles of politics to human reason; Locke deduced them from the laws of nature, which he conceived as laws of God.

Taken over to France, Locke's philosophy was freed from its fallacies by Condillac,⁷ to provide a powerful impetus to the scientific naturalism of the eighteenth century. The revolutionary philosophy of Hobbes, having been of the continental tradition, did not strike deep root in Britain, where religious prejudices, of Puritanism as well as of Anglicanism, lingered to influence the ideology of the rising bourgeoisie, though England was becoming the workshop of the world.

Berkeley's attack upon Materialism and atheism was delivered on the vulnerable point of Locke's epistemology. The ambiguity of his rationalism and the theological penchant of his conception of the natural law were also the points of departure of Hume's empiricism, which shook the faith in the scope of human understanding and validity of human knowledge. The influence of the two most outstanding English philosophers of the eighteenth century sapped the vigour of humanist rationalism.⁸ Supernaturalism

and transcendentalism⁹ were restored in the form of natural religion, allied with which Liberalism in Britain degenerated into political pragmatism and economic cannibalism practised on the plea of individual initiative and liberty.

A reaction to the grand revolt of man against spiritual slavery, which was the fountain-head of Liberalism and which reached its high-water mark in Hobbes's philosophy, was subterraneously inherent in Locke himself.¹⁰ In the disgusting atmosphere of doctrinal fanaticism and confessional bigotry, Locke's advocacy of religious toleration was indeed a blessing. But its historical significance was a compromise in the agelong struggle between faith and reason. In his earlier writings, Locke had inclined to lay emphasis on a clear demarcation between religion and civil authority. But later on, he pleaded for an alliance and harmony between the Church and the State; religion should be tolerant and broadminded, and the State should recognise religion as its basis. Originally, Locke had regarded religion as man's private affair; in that sense, it could continue without causing any confusion. But unable to find an alternative sanction for morality, Locke fell back upon religion: only a common religion could provide a generally accepted standard of moral behaviour. And what is the essence of religion? Faith in something supernatural, beyond the reach of human understanding. Locke's Liberalism made room for faith at the cost of reason.

Utilitarianism with all its fallacies did revolutionise the idea about the purpose of law and function of civil authority. They were no longer to be judged by some imaginary metaphysical standards, but pragmatically; they were to promote public welfare. At the same time, the relapse into transcendentalism is obvious. Locke had provided utilitarianism with a divine sanction: "God has by an inseparable connection joined virtue and public happiness together; that which is for public welfare is God's Will." It is God's will that public welfare should be promoted by good laws made by virtuous men. In other words, man can be virtuous because God wills him to be so. It is the old idea of Grace. Already with its prophet, Liberalism thus moved away from its original ground of Humanism. The cause of the deviation was its inability to find a secular sanction for morality. That problem baffled political philosophers throughout the nineteenth century. It has not yet been solved, because generally philosophy has failed to keep pace with

the growth of scientific knowledge.

The principle of utility, which came to be the foundation of liberal ethics and politics, did not follow logically from Hobbes's rationalist theory of the origin of society. According to that theory, the concept of a community is a fiction; the reality is the cooperation of individuals; and the cooperation results from the urge of self-preservation. The notion of a choice between pleasure and pain as the motive of human action does not have any place in Hobbes's theory, which is rationalist in the sense that the urge for self-preservation is a biological heritage, the biological evolution being a determined process. The choice between pleasure and pain and the urge for self-preservation are two very different ideas. The former presupposes a high level of consciousness whereas the latter operates even before consciousness becomes intelligent perception. In other words, the one is intelligent discrimination, while the other is mechanistic biological adjustment. The original cooperation of human beings was not a matter of choice, preference of pleasure to pain; it was biologically determined by the urge for self-preservation. There was no alternative unless the new species was to be still-born.

These far-reaching implications of Hobbes's theory of the origin of society were not fully grasped by Locke, although he could not visualise "the new ways of ideas" except in the light of the former's mechanistic psychology. Philosophically, Locke was a follower of Hobbes, though with reservations; and it was as such that he inspired the utilitarian ethics of Helvetius, which was brought back to Britain by Bentham as philosophical Radicalism. Moreover, the general trend of progressive political thought at the time of Locke resulted from the doctrine of the natural law, which gave birth to the idea of the liberty and dignity of man as an individual. Notwithstanding his religious preoccupation, Locke interpreted natural law as sanction for the claim of innate, inherent and indefeasible rights of each individual. He went further and held that the function of society and government was to defend and preserve individual rights.

At the same time, through Hooker, Locke also inherited the Aristotelian belief, held throughout the Middle Ages, in the reality of the corporate existence of society. The rejection of that belief, buttressed upon theology, was the precondition for the rise of the idea of democracy and Liberalism. Therefore, freedom and primacy of

the individual constituted the essence of that idea. Yet, Locke's defence of the English Revolution was based upon the mediaeval anti-democratic belief in a fiction. Following Hooker, and as if to prepare the cue for Burke, Locke differentiated the English society from the English government, and argued that the former had persisted in time, while the latter had changed whenever necessary. He interpreted natural law in the mediaeval sense by declaring that it was the permanent and self-perpetuating moral order which expressed itself as the inalienable rights of persons and communities. Locke's Liberalism at its very birth, thus, was a defence of conservatism; and as such, it became the orthodox political creed of the Whig aristocracy, who led the bourgeois revolution and established the capitalist economic order.

Taken over to France by Montesquieu and Voltaire, the truly liberal aspect of Locke's philosophy was developed in two directions: Helvetius constructed the system of utilitarian ethics on the basis of the hypothesis that desire for pleasure and dislike for pain were the prime motives for all human behaviour; and Condillac improved upon the theory of knowledge that ideas were ultimately derived from sense perceptions. Utilitarian ethics and philosophical Radicalism both were, since then, identified with Liberalism. After its discrediting alliance with Whig orthodoxy and conservatism, during the half a century of post-revolutionary reaction, Liberalism in England came to be known either as utilitarianism or philosophical Radicalism. Both were believed to have been deduced from Locke's philosophy. In reality, they were divergent currents of thought—one empirical, the other rationalist. Yet, both could be referred back to the same source, because of the ambiguity and self-contradiction of Locke's philosophy.

Locke's appeal to reason as the final authority was not unreserved. He conceived reason neither in the classical metaphysical sense nor as a biological function. His definition of reason was ambiguous and self-contradictory: it is enquiry into the certainty of knowledge; but in practice, it is wise to be guided by probability, because probability is deduced from conformity of our own experience or the experience of others.¹¹ For Locke, reason was simple commonsense, which he rated higher than logic.¹² Therefore, he is recognised as the founder of empiricism. The utility principle of the nineteenth century Liberalism was deduced from that aspect of Locke's philosophy. Therefore, it was a departure from

the rationalist position of original Liberalism.

Locke's theory of knowledge, as improved by Condillac, was a great contribution to the scientific naturalism or materialist rationalism of the eighteenth century. The *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* begins with arguments for refuting the 'Cartesian doctrine' of innate ideas. Nevertheless, Locke's rejection of the doctrine was not unreserved; because he retained the belief in "the intuitive power of Reason to grasp manifest truths." Condillac argued that all mental processes could be explained in terms of sensations, and therefore Locke's alternative to innate ideas was as superfluous an assumption as the latter. Further improved by Cabanis in the light of the growing knowledge of physiological processes, sensationalism outgrew the fallacies of Locke's empiricism, to be incorporated in the materialist philosophy as finally set forth by Holbach. It clearly stated the fundamental principles of Liberalism and democratic practice: Society is good because its purpose is to give men freedom to their own (individual) welfare; liberty is an inalienable right, because without it there can be no prosperity. The cynic smiled at the utopian notion and enquired how the "miracle" could ever be worked. The answer of the philosophers of Liberalism and advocates of democracy was a proclamation of their faith in the innate rationality of man and the consequent human creativeness. Men are rational and therefore capable of judging what is good for them and follow their own judgment. Enlighten them, remove the obstacles created by ignorance and superstition, and the light of reason will shine to show them the right way. Each following his true self-interest, general good will follow.¹³

While the truly liberal aspect of Locke's philosophy thus elaborated, was incorporated in the mightiest manifesto of man's freedom, Hume carried empiricism to its logical consequences which blasted the philosophical foundation of Liberalism. The principle of utility, applied to ethics as well as to the problems of social relations, was empirical. Therefore, it was antithetical to Liberalism, although in the nineteenth century the latter became synonymous with utilitarianism. Cut adrift from the rationalist and individualist philosophical moorings, Liberalism logically betrayed itself and moved towards its negation either by chauvinistic nationalism or by social collectivism. The process to the former direction

was promoted by the philosophy of Fichte and Hegel, whereas Karl Marx was the prophet of the latter.

NOTES

1. Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Man*.
2. *Ibid*.
3. Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man*.
4. *Ibid*.
5. James Mackintosh, *Vindiciae Gallicae*.
6. Even in the nineteenth century, utilitarian Liberalism was allied with the Evangelical movement. In an article on "Fitzjames Stephen and Liberal Doctrine," the *Times Literary Supplement* (Nov. 27, 1948) wrote: "The close alliance between the Utilitarians and the Evangelicals, which explains most of English history in the first half of the nineteenth century, was not an accident. Both had arisen in protest against the arid conservatism of the eighteenth century, with its extravagant respect for forms. Bentham recalled common lawyers to reason as Wesley recalled Anglicans to the Gospel."
 "The central issue of the philosophical controversy of the Victorian age was how to accommodate Christianity in a society undergoing vast changes in its structure, its wealth and its technology." (Allen Willard Brown, *The Metaphysical Society*).
7. Condillac pointed out that Locke's rejection of the Cartesian concept of "innate ideas" did not go to the extent of discarding the belief in the innate faculties of the soul.
8. Hume's criticism of the doctrine of natural law and attack on rationalism not only inspired Burke's outburst against the democratic principles of the French Revolution, but also, through Kant, they went into the making of Hegel's pseudo-romantic neomedievalism.
9. "In any case, Hume's positivism had the paradoxical effect of producing an elaborate metaphysics, a religious revival and a firmer belief in absolute ethical values." (G. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory*).
10. The epistemological weakness of the philosophy of sensation resulted from Locke's reluctance to accept without reservation Hobbes's materialist rationalism. In political philosophy, he actually tried to refute Hobbes on the authority of mediaeval traditions inherited through Hooker.
11. *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.
12. "He is always sensible, and always willing to sacrifice logic rather than become paradoxical. He enunciates general principles which are

capable of leading to strange consequences; but whenever the strange consequences seem about to appear, Locke blandly refrains from drawing them. To a logician, it is irritating; to a practical man, it is a proof of sound judgment." (Bertand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*.)

13. Holbach, *The System of Nature*.

Chapter XVII

UTILITARIANISM

Freed from all its ambiguities and fallacies by Hume, the empiricism of Locke developed into a complete rejection of rationalism. Analysing the concept of reason, Hume reached the conclusion that there was no principle of right or justice or liberty deducible from the Law of Nature. Generalising the conclusion, he declared that, if the confusion created by the concept of reason was cleared away, the belief in the rationality of natural laws must be discarded as an unnecessary and groundless postulate. Hume's criticism was not only directed against the rationalist natural religion associated with the eighteenth century Liberalism; it also denied the possibility of a rationalist ethics, and maintained that judgment of values was entirely conventional, without any logical or factual criterion. A rigid distinction between reason, fact and values was a major premise of Hume's devastating scepticism, which made Locke's empiricism "consistent but incredible". "He represents, in a certain sense, a dead end; in his direction, it is impossible to go farther."¹ Contemporary logical positivism is a legacy of Hume, it being in the tradition of his reckless empiricism.

Locke believed in the possibility of a rationalist ethics. Hume held that there was no demonstrable connection between reason and morality. He disputed that there was any objective criterion of morality, and maintained that it was a matter of mere convention. "Morals excite passions, and produce or prevent actions. Reason of itself is impotent in this particular. The rules of morality, therefore, are not conclusions of our reasons." The basic contention is backed up by Hume's definition of ethics: "The only object of reasoning (about morals) is to discover the circumstances on both sides which are common to these qualities (estimable or blameable), to observe that particular in which the estimable qualities agree on the one hand, and blameable, on the other; and

thence reach the foundation of ethics, and find those universal principles from which all censure or approbation is ultimately derived. And as this is a question of fact, not of abstract science, we can only expect success by following the experimental method, and deducting general maxims from a comparison of particular instances.²

If Hume's major premise is granted, then it must be admitted that his arguments destroy the fundamental principles of Liberalism and Democracy. The doctrine of natural law must be scrapped; the belief, deduced therefrom, in natural rights, in self-evident truths, and in objective standards of morality, therefore, should also be discarded; cherished values like justice and liberty could claim no immutable moral sanction. The only criterion of judgment is utility; the highest court of appeal is convention, in other words, convenience. But whose convenience? Of those in positions of privilege and power. For all practical purposes, that was the implication of utilitarianism.

Although he did not use the term, Hume has gone down in the history of philosophy and ethical theory as the founder of utilitarianism. In the last analysis, utilitarianism is a theory of morals.³ As a political theory, it is only an application of Hume's empirical ethics. "The essential doctrines of utilitarianism are stated (by Hume) with a clarity and consistency not to be found in any other writer of the (19th) century. From Hume to John Stuart Mill, the doctrine received no substantial alteration."⁴

Hume's scepticism went to the extent of doubting the existence of the Self. Another foundation of Liberalism was thus blasted. The idea of individual liberty becomes meaningless when the very existence of the ego is doubted. The implication of the doubt is very far-reaching: the belief in man's creativeness is an illusion, because it presupposes the existence of self-consciousness, and in the absence of the Self, this condition cannot be fulfilled. From yet another direction, Hume's scepticism reached the conclusion of denying the creativity of man and indeed ruling out the possibility of knowledge. It was his rejection of the inductive method, without which there could be no natural science; and without the growing knowledge of nature, man would never be able to harness her forces and utilise her resources for his welfare. With the bliss of ignorance, mankind would be still living in the state of savagery.⁵

"In a sense, his scepticism is insincere, since he cannot maintain it in practice. It has, however, this awkward consequences that it paralyses every effort to prove one line of action better than another. It was inevitable that such a self-refutation of rationality should be followed by a great outburst of irrational faith. The growth of unreason throughout the nineteenth century and what has passed of the twentieth, is a natural sequel to Hume's destruction of empiricism."⁶ As an antithesis to rationalism, in which reason is conceived as an integral part of man's biological heritage, empiricism can lead only to unbounded scepticism and sterile positivism. Unfortunately, the principle of utility, which guided the practice of Liberalism in the nineteenth century, was influenced by empiricism as elaborated by Hume.

Locke held that things were good or evil only in relation to pleasure and pain. "What is apt to cause or increase pleasure, we call happiness. Happiness motivates desire, and happiness in its fullest extent is the utmost pleasure we are capable of." From these rather confused arguments Locke concluded: "The necessity of pursuing true happiness is the foundation of all liberty." Then he goes over to lay the foundation of his ethics: "The preference of vice to virtue is a manifest wrong judgment." The basic rule of conduct is laid down on the strength of this bald assertion: "The government of our passions is the right improvement of liberty."

While control of passion must be given a prominent place in a rationalist system of ethics, it is difficult to imagine what Locke meant by "improvement of liberty". However, this is yet another of the numerous ambiguities of his philosophy. The fundamental ideas of his ethics were evidently not carefully thought out. Consequently, utilitarianism could only defeat its original praise worthy purpose to free human behaviour from the feeling of a super-human compulsion so that morality could be the result of a rational choice between right and wrong.

Since the leader of the Cambridge Platonists, Bishop Cumberland (1632-1718), expounded the doctrine that "universal benevolence" was the foundation of ethics, universal hedonism, as against Hobbesian rationalism, came to be the generally accepted guiding principle of the English moral philosophy. Utilitarianism as an ethical theory is much older than the social and political doctrines deduced from it by Bentham and the Mills in the nineteenth century. According to Cumberland, an ethical theory is that by

which "a certain rule or measure is afforded to the prudent man's judgment, by the help whereof he may ascertain that just measure in his actions and affections in which virtue consists."⁸ Cumberland laid great stress on the "practical value of a correct ethical theory." He argued to show that individuals acted in an altruistic manner because they found it to be conducive to their own happiness. "No action can be morally good which does not in its own nature contribute somewhat to the happiness of man." The utilitarian normative ethics was developed with theological reference by Gay, Tucker and Paley until, secularised by Hume, it became relativist, to deny the permanence of moral values.

Utilitarianism as it subsequently developed maintained that the end of human behaviour was to enjoy the largest measure of pleasure and suffer as little pain as possible. It was in that form that utilitarianism was presented in France. Until Bentham brought it back in the form given to it by Helvetius, the utilitarianism of Locke had received not only the stamp of Whig orthodoxy, but also was patronised by theologians and Church dignitaries who interpreted the utilitarian ideal as happiness in after-life.

Indeed, without such an ideal, the contradiction between the two basic articles of the utilitarian faith could never be reconciled. There are personal and psychological hedonism and social and moral hedonism. In other words, the propositions that men do and ought to pursue their own happiness, and that they ought to pursue the greatest happiness for the greatest number was adumbrated. There was evidently a moral conflict between morally justified egoism and morally ordained social duty. The clash of two categorical imperatives (two "oughts") could be composed by the belief in ever-lasting rewards and punishments in a life after death. Enlightened self-interest of gaining eternal (the greatest imaginable) happiness would induce men to behave according to the categorical imperative of social morality. The individual ego must be subordinated to the collective ego. Thus, utilitarianism provided a moral sanction for the various totalitarian cults far ahead of time.

A system of ethics based upon the principles of utility was worked out by Helvetius. The psychology of the system was sensationalist, deduced from Locke's theory of mind and knowledge. Consistent with the trend of the eighteenth century French philosophy, Helvetius went beyond Locke and adopted Hobbes's clearly materialist description of sensation as the basis of his ethics.

He proposed to treat ethics like any other science and the treatment was to be as empirical as of physics. A moral philosophy which would not require any transcendental sanction must start from an understanding of the forces which cause human action. That understanding presupposed a theory of human nature. Hobbes had advanced a theory (hypothesis) which dispensed with irrational assumptions. But he had not made any ethical deductions from his theory of human nature. Locke's doctrine that desire for pleasure and dislike for pain were the prime motives of all human behaviour was based upon the philosophy of sensation, which was an elaboration of Hobbes's materialist psychology. So, Helvetius took over the pleasure and pain principle of Locke as the starting point of his ethics.

However, he did not dogmatically assert that to seek pleasure was the basic motive of human action. He preferred the term "self-interest", which had a much larger connotation, and maintained that, if proper education helped men know what was their true self-interest, they would see how it could be in harmony with general welfare. Helvetius provided utilitarian ethics with a sound psychological foundation by merging psychology into physiology. All human behaviour, in the last analysis is caused by physical sensation; pleasure is a mental state; happiness is much more so. Therefore, it can be analysed to psychological processes, mind itself being the sum total of sensations. Though he held that the greatest good of the greatest number was the only rational standard of conduct, he insisted that goodness should be referred to individual judgment. So, ultimately, the sanction of his ethics was not the principle of utility, but human nature, which according to his psychology was rational. He made moral behaviour conditional on education, such as would free man's mind from superstition and ignorance and enable him to act rationally.

Nevertheless, utilitarian ethics, even as developed by Helvetius, was full of fallacies which led to a denial of the absoluteness of any moral value; and as relativist morality it was bound to end in ethical nihilism. This process took place after utilitarianism had been reintroduced in England by Bentham. But its evil effects, when applied to economics, made themselves felt already in France. The physiocrats led by Quesnay introduced the principle of utility in the economic science and declared that general welfare and social harmony would result from everybody acting according to enlight-

ened self-interest. But they did not follow Helvetius in attaching supreme importance of legislation as the means to the protection and promotion of general welfare. On the contrary, they demanded that government should not interfere with the natural operation of economic laws; since to seek pleasure was the common incentive of human behaviour, and general welfare would result from the liberty of individuals to seek pleasure, there should be no restriction on individual initiative and enterprise in the economic field. Theoretically, demanded for all, freedom from State interference, in the economic field, could be in practice available only to a fortunate few. The economic doctrine of *laissez faire* could be plausibly deduced from the liberal principle of utility; therefore, those who were benefitted by the doctrine declared allegiance to Liberalism.

If capitalist economy and the interests of the class deriving benefit from it could be related to Liberalism, although there is no evidence to prove that it was a causal relation, Marxist amorality can be similarly related to the utilitarian (relativist) ethics of the nineteenth century Liberalism. Yet no body has called it the ideology of the working class. Ideas develop by themselves in the right or wrong direction. If they are utilised to justify the claim or to promote the interest of one or another class, the relation is obviously accidental, not causal.

Although Bentham and his followers were professed rationalists, they were greatly influenced by Hume's empiricism, which had rejected the doctrine of natural law. Bentham's criticism of Blackstone's theory of law was based upon Hume's arguments against the contractual theory of government and the "meaningless" idea of natural rights. With such arguments, contrary to the original principles of Liberalism, partly his own and partly borrowed from Hume, Bentham asserted that what law can and ought to do can be intelligently discussed only with the consideration of the greatest happiness for the greatest number. "The legislator can rear the fabric of felicity by the hands of reason and of law."⁹

The fundamental fallacy of the logic of utilitarian ethics was the conflict between personal and psychological hedonism and social and moral hedonism. That is to say, between the proposition that men do, and ought to, pursue their own happiness, and the proposition that they ought to pursue the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The conflict could be composed only by intro-

ducing the postulate of survival beyond the grave, and with it the belief in ever-lasting rewards and punishments. Thus, the Benthamites did not improve upon Paley's pietist ethics.¹⁰

Characterising Mill's *Essays on Liberty* as "the best expression of the confused sentiments and prejudices of Victorian Radicalism" Sir James Fitzjames Stephen showed the unsoundness of liberal optimism by exposing the authoritarian implications of Parliamentary democracy. He argued that the illusion that liberty and equality were complementary was due to the false assumption that the whole world tendency of history was towards the diminution of power. In fact, the opposite was true. Political equality, the equal distribution of voting power, merely increased the necessary inequality between the government and the governed, since nothing was harder to overthrow than a government grounded on popular sovereignty; and the majority, being necessarily composed of the less fortunate members of society, had a stronger temptation than any other class to use politics for its own aggrandisement.¹¹

Utilitarianism had moved far away from the original position of Liberalism. It was a humanist philosophy which proclaimed man's right to be the architect of his own destiny, and maintained on the evidence of scientific knowledge that man was naturally endowed with that right. It was a fiction to say that man was born free; but it was a truth that man was born to be free, endowed by nature with the potentialities to work out his own freedom. Liberalism proclaimed that every human being was possessed of those liberating potentialities; therefore, freedom was his natural right. Otherwise, individualism would have no meaning. Utilitarianism substituted the humanist principle of Liberalism by a humanitarian approach to the problems of law, political administration and social relations. It advocated political and social reforms, but believed that they could only be imposed from above—by intelligent legislators guided by reason. With this sort of rationalist belief, one could just as well rely upon benevolent despots.¹²

Bentham agreed with Burke that the "Rights of Man" was a set of "anarchical fallacies". He placed security above equality. "The first condition for happiness is not equality but security. You can only equalise at the expense of security. If I am to have my property taken away whenever it is greater than my neighbour's, I can have no security. Hence, if the two principles conflict, equality should give way. Security is primary, which must override the

secondary aim".¹³

Bentham's scattered ideas collected and systematised by Austin at last made it clear that representative government was not a democratic government. Analysing the concept of delegated authority, Austin came to the conclusion that government was composed of persons endowed with power to rule others, and that the relation between the rulers and the ruled was determined by the latter's habit of obedience. In Austinian jurisprudence, inspired by Benthamite Liberalism, God is the supreme law giver bound by no rules. His fiat is supported by an irresistible force.¹⁴

The nineteenth century utilitarians passionately proclaimed their faith in individualism, but actually drifted towards collectivism. Under the influence of Hume's anti-rational empiricism, they theoretically rejected the doctrine of natural¹⁵ law which had provided the philosophical sanction for the fundamental democratic principle of individual liberty, but at the same time, in practice, they appealed to it for the maintenance of social order. They judged social well-being in terms of individual happiness, although economic development according to their doctrine of *laissez faire*, reduced the majority of individuals to a state of utter helplessness; and traditional liberal ideas like the sovereignty of the individual, equality before law, freedom of enterprise and initiative, and on and so forth, became legal fictions of empty slogans.¹⁶ During the latter part of the nineteenth century, utilitarian Liberalism was corrupted by the influence of the collectivist criticism of the fundamental liberal principle—the dignity and sovereignty of the individual.

Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* was written under the impact of Hume's scepticism: Fichte and Hegel developed the idealist tendency of the Kantian metaphysics; and Hegel was the philosopher of collectivism—chauvinistic Nationalism as well as evolutionary Communism drew their inspiration from him. At the same time, it was as a Hegelian idealist that Green attempted to revise Liberalism; and finally, by adopting Bossanquet's mystic conception of the State, Liberalism killed Democracy and committed suicide.

The decline and degeneration of Liberalism had little to do with the decay of Capitalism. The last decades of the nineteenth century were the hey day of Capitalism. The decline and degeneration of Liberalism resulted from its moving away under the banner

of utilitarianism from its original philosophical position of naturalist Humanism, scientific Rationalism and metaphysical Materialism.

Previously, romanticism could not be tempered by reason. The result was the post-revolution reaction of the early nineteenth century. Utilitarian Liberalism represented a revolt of reason against reactionary neo-romanticism. This time, reason failed to be enlivened by romanticism. The utilitarian plan of imposing social and political reforms from above, of creating happiness by legislation, presupposed lack of the faith that every human being was possessed of unbounded creativeness and, therefore, could be the maker of his own destiny. The very possibility of Democracy, a government of the people and by the people, presuppose faith in the potential equality of men. The utilitarian plan, therefore, implied negation of Democracy, and heralded the advent of dictatorship, of one kind or another.

Utilitarian rationalism, which placed emotion and imagination under a heavy discount, was personified particularly by the Mills. With the father, reason meant cold calculation; the trading class on the way to prosperity were finding that utilitarian virtues they could cultivate profitably. The providence of the rational laws of economics had predetermined progress towards the goal of the greatest good for the greatest number. In the secular teleological order of the nineteenth century utilitarian Liberalism, man had no freedom but to obey the new Providence. The initiative and enterprise of the fortunate few with money were also according to the providential economic law. To advocate any restriction of their freedom in the name of justice and equality, was romantic extravagance, which was strongly condemned by James Mill together with other utilitarians. It was a vulgarisation of rationalism.

John Stuart Mill was educated under the strictest supervision of his father, who believed that he was practising the theory of Helvetius. But the product was not a new personality; he was a duplication of his father. John Stuart, however, threw off his father's influence soon after the latter's death, and tried to put some living flesh on the dry bones of utilitarian rationalism, now completely at the service of the prosperous middle class. He came nearer to Hume than Bentham, and was influenced by the former's critique of utilitarianism. Consequently he attached less importance to egoism, and rejected his father's narrow understanding

of rationalism. But he was more directly influenced by Comte's positivism, and also by Carlyle and Coleridge, who introduced in England the German collectivist Liberalism as preached by Fichte. While thus coming under the influence of neoromantic conservatism, John Stuart Mill also moved towards Socialism.

Though full of inconsistencies Mill's essay *On Liberty* wielded a more lasting influence than any other political treatise of his time. The inconsistencies resulted from the fallacies of utilitarianism which contradicted the philosophical principles of Liberalism by providing a moral justification for authoritarian tendencies.¹⁷

In his essay *On Liberty* he harked back to the moral ideal, if not the philosophical principles of classical Liberalism. Utilitarian ethics not only of Bentham but also of Helvetius, was meant to be the guide for reforming legislation. It could have no personal application. The goal of the greatest good to the greatest number could not possibly be attained by any individual; pleasure might be regarded, erroneously as the prime motive of human behaviour, but it could hardly be raised to the status of a moral value. Utilitarianism offered a powerful critique of the orthodox moral philosophy; but it failed to present a positive alternative. Bentham was primarily concerned with law. Helvetius made an attempt which did not go beyond laying down a sound psychological foundation of a system of humanist ethics. Taken as a whole *L'Essprit* is rather a treatise on education and social reform than on ethics.

In this respect, John Stuart Mill made a significant contribution, but in doing so he took up a position which was not consistent with utilitarianism. At the same time it was not a resurrection of true Liberalism. Morally outraged by the actual result of the unrestricted operation of the "natural law" of economics, John Stuart Mill advocated a measure of legislative control to guarantee a more equitable distribution of wealth. The suggestion by itself would not be repugnant to Liberalism unless it logically implied a departure from the humanist principle of the sovereign individual towards the socialist conception of a collective ego. Of course any such departure was not explicit in John Stuart Mill. Yet he is believed to have sympathised with the new socialist ideas which outraged his rationalist father.

What was regarded as sympathy for Socialism might be interpreted also as justification for authoritarianism logically following

from the fallacies of Liberalism. Mill's essay *On Liberty* was the product of the reflection in his mind of a conflict which was then going on in the mind of England. It arose from the need for reconciling the abstract principles of Liberalism with the pressing need of the modern society for a centralised authority.

However, the more significant feature of utilitarianism as elaborated by John Stuart Mill was the recognition of moral values that could be cherished individually. Never before had liberty as a personal right been accorded such supreme importance in utilitarian political thoughts. In doing so, he transgressed the limit set by the ideal; one could not take up the Voltairean attitude to the question of liberty of thought and expression as John Stuart Mill did. The orthodox utilitarian dictum logically justifies suppression of a minority even of forty-nine (because fifty-one is a greater number), and thus keeps the door open to dictatorship. Dictatorial political theories and collectivist social doctrines thus logically resulted from the utilitarian degeneration of Liberalism. Democracy, possible within the limits of utilitarianism and even of orthodox Liberalism was bound to be so defective that it could not successfully take up the challenge of dictatorship.

Indeed, thanks to Green's restatement, nineteenth century Liberalism could offer a philosophical apology for dictatorship, claiming to represent the whole of a community as against refractory minorities which refuse to be free. In a typical Hegelian style Green made a distinction between positive and negative freedom. Criticising the old liberal doctrine of the freedom of contract he declared that freedom as the end of citizenship did not consist, in the absence of restraint. That, he held, was a negative idea of freedom. Positive freedom was the capacity of self-realisation, the conditions for the attainment of which ideal are guaranteed by an orderly, harmonious social order.¹⁸ The implication of this positive idea of freedom is clear enough: individual freedom is realised in the harmony of the community.¹⁹ An echo of the Hegelian doctrine of the State. Green went farther back to the Aristotelian idea of corporate society which dominated mediaeval political theories until the rise of Liberalism. Individuals constitute society; but the whole is greater than its parts; therefore, its claim is prior; the welfare of society automatically means good life for its members. Since positive freedom is available only to the members of a harmonious community, individual liberty presupposes collec-

tive well-being and collective consent.

Nevertheless, Green did not discard the idea of individual liberty; only, he conceived it is the liberty, that is, choice either to serve the community intelligently and conscientiously, or not. The latter choice he held was negation of liberty. He interpreted Liberalism so as to declare that collective well-being was the precondition for individual freedom. The corollary was the idea of a social service State. This idea was taken up by the Fabian Society, which heralded the birth of the British Labour Party.

Green's revision compelled Liberalism to move simultaneously also in the opposite direction of conservatism. This tendency was represented by Bosanquet who was a thorough-going Hegelian. He held that the community functioning through the State, was the custodian of all moral values; that it represented what all its members would desire if they were conscious of their corporate existence, which was real as against the abstraction of individuality.²⁰ This theory of dictatorship which could easily rise on the background of formal Parliamentary democracy, was the apotheosis of utilitarian Liberalism.

NOTES

1. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*.
2. *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*.
3. Since Cudworth and Price, the typical English ethics had all along been utilitarian.
4. Leslie Stephen, *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*.
5. A detailed criticism of Hume's philosophy is outside the scope of the book. The above outline suffices for the purpose of proving that consistent empiricism is antithetical to the basic principles of philosophical liberalism.
6. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*.
7. *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.
8. Bishop Cumberland, *De Legibus Naturae*.
9. Bentham, *Fragments on Government*.
10. Stephen, for example, believed that the conception of hell was a social necessity.
11. James Fitzjames Stephen, *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*.
12. Bentham "cared little for liberty. He admired the benevolent autocrats who preceded the French Revolution. He had a great contempt for the doctrine of the rights of man. The rights of man, he said, are plain nonsense." (Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*.)

13. *Principles of Penal Code.*
14. John Austin, *Lectures on jurisprudence*. It is significant that Austin delivered his lectures in the University of London, founded as the centre of the nineteenth century liberal thought.
15. The rational hypothesis of the natural law providing sanction for values like justice and liberty can never be empirically verified by direct sense perception, but logical concepts are not mere verbal propositions. In the last analysis, they are based on experience. Empiricism destroys rationalism in which reason is a transcendental category. There is no contradiction between a balanced empiricism which does not exclude inference, and naturalistic rationalism which conceives reasons as a biological property.
16. The following picture of Bentham's utilitarian man is drawn by his critical follower, Leslie Stephen: "The respectable citizen, with a policeman round the corner. Such a man may well hold that honesty is the best policy; he has enough sympathy to be kind to his old mother, and help a friend in distress; but the need of romantic and elevated conduct rarely occurs to him; and the heroic, if he meets it, appears to him as an exception, not far removed from the silly. He does not reflect—specially if he cares nothing for history—how even the society in which he is a contented unit has been built up, and how much loyalty and heroism has been needed for the work; nor even, to do him justice, what unsuspected capacities may lurk in his own common place character." (*The English Utilitarians*).
17. Mill's *Essay on Liberty* was characterised as "the best expression of the confused sentiments and prejudices of Victorian radicalism." (Fitz-james Stephen, *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity*.)

"Mill's principle can be used, according to taste, to justify the most rigid totalitarianism or the most unqualified anarchy.....The idea or social sanction authorises one of the most dangerous and tempting forms of tyranny.....By admitting that in certain circumstances men might properly be protected against themselves, Mill provided a ready-made justification for paternal despotism, and in his anxiety to avoid contradictions came near to postulating that concept of a *real will*, superior to the conscious and particular will, and expressing itself in the commands of the State which is the basis of those metaphysical and Germanic philosophies to which Mill's Liberalism is generally regarded as a wholesome corrective....For all its vaunted belief in free will, secular liberalism, in fact, solved the problem of liberty by ignoring its existence....It is for this reason that, while Mill's Liberalism had slowly degenerated into collectivism, the Christian Churches had emerged in the unfamiliar role of the champions of civil liberty." (The Times Literary Supplement, July 20 1948).

18. The veteran philosopher of nineteenth century Liberalism, Benedetto Croce, defines liberty as a "moral ideal" of the Hegelian conception. "In modern times, (liberty) had passed for liberty as a complex of privileges to liberty as a natural right, and from that abstract natural right to the spiritual liberty of the historically concrete personality. And it had become gradually more coherent and more solid. Strengthened by the corresponding philosophy according to which that which is the law of being is the law of what must be." (*The History of the Nineteenth Century Europe.*) The Hegelian conversion of liberal philosophy is thus admitted authoritatively. Arguing against those who hold that the moral ideal of liberty allows nor promises the expulsion of evil from the world, Croce writes: "If morality should destroy the idea of evil, it would itself vanish; only in the struggle against evil does morality have reality and life." So, evil is permanent—as the old Manicheans preached!
19. T.H. Green, *Lectures on Political Obligation*.
20. B. Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*.

Chapter XVIII

NEO-CLASSICAL RATIONALISM

THE NATURALISM of the eighteenth century was rationalist as well as romantic. Rejecting the metaphysical implication of classical rationalism, it placed reason in the human being and inspired by the tradition of the Renaissance, proclaimed the sovereignty of man possessed of an unlimited creativeness. Closely associated with the development of modern science, it was methodologically empirical. Empiricism destroyed mystic metaphysics. But at the same time as interpreted in Britain, particularly by Berkeley and Hume, it not only cast doubt on metaphysics (ontology) as such, but also actually appeared to be antithetical to rationalism. The eighteenth century naturalism tried to base ethics, social as well as individual, on rationality. By casting doubt on rationalism empiricists like Hume encouraged, though certainly not deliberately, a revival of the traditional belief that religion alone could provide the sanction for morality. This negative implication of empiricism became explicit in Berkeley's philosophy. The tendency also culminated in Rousseau's mystic, nature-worship and reactionary romanticism. Finally, Hegel's philosophy combined reactionary romanticism with classical rationalism. It was a landmark in the nineteenth century as did Aristotle's system at the close of the Socratic era of the Hellenistic culture.

In the nineteenth century Germany became the leader of philosophical thought in Europe. Since Hume Britain had not produced a great philosopher, nor had France since the Encyclopedists. "The Western powers devoted themselves entirely to the tasks of real life. Meanwhile metaphysics was left to us in Germany."¹

Why did Germany become the land of poets and philosophers, while the countries of Western Europe forged ahead on the road of political progress and material prosperity? The Marxists alone offer a categorical reply to the question; because socially and eco-

nomically Germany was the most backward country, the German bourgeoisie was not strong enough to capture power; the mystic metaphysics culminating in Hegel was the ideological superstructure of the feudal social order which still presisted in Germany.

Facts, however heralded, do not bear this simplification of history. The Reformation is said to have heralded the rise of the bourgeoisie and laid the ideological foundation of the capitalist social order. It took place in Germany, and its influence there was naturally more abiding and far-reaching than in other countries. The philosophy of Kant and Hegel clearly bore the stamp of the influence of the Reformation. On the other hand, Rousseau also was a fervent admirer of the Calvinist Order of Geneva, and both the great German philosophers were influenced by him. Finally, Kant as well as Hegel began as scientific naturalists of the eighteenth century school; they were supporters of the Great Revolution, and welcomed Napoleon's victory over the feudal princes of Germany. What is of decisive importance is that a dispassionate appreciation of the philosophies of Kant and Hegel show that they were in the tradition of the "new philosophy" which overthrew the age-long domination of theology at the close of the Middle Ages. "Kant is the transition to distinctly modern thought".² Hegel developed the "new science" of Vico, and passed it on to Marx to enable him to predict the coming of the proletarian revolution. He was John the Baptist of the prophet of Communism.

"All the leading ideas of the present day were produced in Germany between 1780 to 1830" (Taine). The period covered the latter part of Kant's life and the whole of Hegel's. Two currents of thought originating respectively in the Renaissance and the Reformation fed the intellectual life of modern Europe. The German philosophy of the Kant-Hegel period had its share of the heritage.

Although the exhaustion caused by the Thirty Years' War retarded the development of Germany in every walk of life, she was not altogether untouched by the intellectual ferment of the seventeenth century. The two basic ideas of the philosophy of Leibniz had a much greater influence on Liberalism than is generally realised. *Monadology* was essentially a philosophical support for individualism of the Epicurean tradition. On the other hand, the conception of a pre-established harmony indicated the possibility of a synthesis between individual liberty and social organisation.

Soon after Leibniz a more pronouncedly naturalist version of Locke's Liberalism was introduced in Germany by John Toland; he was befriended by Sophie Charlotte, Queen of Prussia who was a Spinoist. While from the time of Klopstock irrational romanticism and subjective idealism dominated German poetry, pre Kantian philosophy was greatly influenced by Locke and Spinoza. The large volume of polemical literature against scientific naturalism or the materialist philosophy is a measure of the importance the latter had acquired in the intellectual life of Germany. Barring its ethics and aesthetics Kant's philosophy was a substantial contribution to scientific naturalism and materialist metaphysics. Yet the purpose of the entire Kantian system is believed to have been the annihilation of Materialism.

The current of rationalist thought flowing from the Renaissance and reinforced by the seventeenth century classicism was represented by Leibniz and Lessing. In Herder the rationalist tradition was enriched by romanticism as expressed in the humanist historiology of Vico and the organic conception of social development. Learning from Leibniz, that harmony was the essence of organic evolution, Lessing, and after him Herder introduced in the German Aufklärung a historical sense which was partially lacking in the French Enlightenment. Hegel took over the idea and cast it in a neo-classical rationalist mould. The result was a comprehensive system of philosophy which directly dominated the intellectual life of Europe for nearly a century and, through Marxism, continues to do so even today. At the same time through Kant Hegel inherited also the pietist tradition of the Reformation.

Empiricism was the key note of the eighteenth century philosophy. A strictly empirical attitude leads to subjectivism; and the logical consequence of subjectivism is solipsism. This tendency was inherent even in Descartes rationalism which started from self-consciousness (*Cogito, ergo Sum*). Cartesian subjectivism reached its culmination in the *Monadology* of Leibniz, who declared that even if the rest of the world was annihilated nothing would change in the experience of a windowless monad. Locks escaped the solipsist consequence of a thorough-going empiricism through the loophole of his theory of ideas which was a clear departure from the sensationalist psychology and epistemology. Berkeley held that empiricism could not have a metaphysics, and the religious prejudice of a Bishop enabled the empiricist philosophy to escape

solipsism. The nihilistic implications of pure empiricism not to allow thought and judgement to be influenced by anything beyond the reach of direct experience was fully thought out by Hume. His rigorously logical scepticism led to conclusions clearly repugnant to commonsense. Hume escaped solipsism but destroyed modern rationalist philosophy as it had developed since Bacon and Descartes.

In France, Rousseau's revolt against Reason encouraged emotional exuberance which pushed the scientific naturalism of the Encyclopedists to the background. In the aftermath of the Revolution, mystic and religious romanticism eclipsed philosophical thought, which had been reduced to absurdity by the greatest philosopher of the eighteenth century. In that atmosphere, the creative power of the human mind in Britain and France turned to the enquiry into the diverse phenomena of nature, an endeavour which yielded tangible results.

The task of rehabilitating philosophy was undertaken in Germany by Kant, and completed by Hegel whose system had the same significance for the classical rationalist idealism as Hume's had for empiricism in the eighteenth century. The latter had abolished the distinction between reason and faith—rational belief and credulity; Hegel identified being with non-being. He rehabilitated philosophy in the sense of clearing the ground for its further development on the basis laid down by a whole succession of speculative thinkers, from Bacon and Descartes to the French Encyclopedists, and with the rich material of positive knowledge provided by the physical and biological sciences.

Thought and knowledge presuppose non-ego as well as the ego. The failure to grasp this most self-evident truth was the weakness of the Cartesian system. Even self-consciousness is not possible unless the ego, at least partially or temporarily, objectifies itself. Descartes deduced being from thought, but did not analyse the category of thought, which is conditional upon something outside itself. The ego thinks about something, it may be its own self. In that case the ego is objectified to be the object of thought. The second fallacy of the Cartesian system was the imagination of an unimaginable gulf between the worlds of mind and matter, between thought and being. That was another remarkable slip in the thinking process of the "restorer of philosophy". Descartes deduced being from thought at the same time declaring them to

be qualitatively different, separated by an unbridgeable gulf. He escaped subjectivism, implied in the dictum; '*Cogito, ergo Sum*,' and its nihilistic consequences, by arbitrarily introducing an absolute dualism in his philosophy. Sensationalist epistemology was an outcome of Cartesian dualism, although, Locke might not have been conscious of the connection. Dualism rules out objective knowledge, reduces metaphysics to speculations about empty abstractions, and thus destroys philosophy. Sensationalism had the same significance as Berkeley pointed out. Under the influence of the tradition of Cartesian dualism, Hume turned back upon metaphysics, and his consistent empiricism blasted the foundation of philosophy.

The relation between the subject and the object, therefore, was the crucial problem of philosophy. Kant tried to solve it, but failed, because his approach was also empirical. He took the duality of the world for granted and tried to show that knowledge resulted from the interaction of the two worlds. To make the interaction between two qualitatively different worlds possible, he attributed to mind some a priori conceptual patterns. The world of experience is neither a creation of the mind; nor is it an adequate picture of actual things. Therefore, knowledge, though not mere self-contemplation of the ego, is never knowledge of a thing-in-itself, but as it enters into experience. So the unity of the two worlds is only a matter of experience. It is a subjective point of view. Objectively, the duality persists. Therefore, Kant, though he himself began as a disciple of Newton, rejected the eighteenth century philosophy of nature on the ground, that imitating mediaeval metaphysics, it chased the phantom of absolute knowledge. That was a false charge; scientific naturalism only claimed objective validity for knowledge. Objective knowledge is not absolute knowledge. Kant argued that the mind knows things only as they fit into its a priori conceptual patterns; it could never know things-in-themselves; they are not only unknown, but also unknowable. The implication is that there is no objective truth. If truth is conceived as a subjective, therefore, a relative category, the entire hierarchy of values collapses. Therefore, Kant was compelled to crown his system with a dogmatic ethics.

Kant and the German philosophy founded by him rejected eighteenth century naturalism because they were in the tradition of the Renaissance and the latter drew its inspiration from the Renais-

sance and the history of humanist culture. Though a supporter of the French Revolution in his earlier stages, Kant broke with the Enlightenment by denying the article of humanist faith that man was good by nature. Following Luther, he believed in the doctrine of the original sin, a philosophical interpretation of which came to be the foundation of his dogmatic ethic. Notwithstanding his religious bias Kant lived two-hundred years after Luther, and therefore as an educated man, could not ignore the knowledge science had acquired in the meantime. He did not regard biological functions—passion and sensual desire—as evils by themselves. But they compelled man to go against the motive-force of human existence, namely, duty; therefore, they are evils and, as they are biological functions, man is by nature evil. A constant struggle against the evils inherent in his biological being, so that he can do the dictates of duty and obey law, is the foundation of morality. Categorical imperatives had to be postulated to provide sanction for such a servile ethics.

Philosophically Kant's doctrine of two worlds led him to his dogmatic ethics. His empirical approach to the problem of the relation between the subject and the object was so very fallacious that it further aggravated the problem by setting up yet another system of dualism. Kant held that there was a world of science and a world of morals that reason made this division. Since it could legislate for both, reason must be superior to either. Reason, therefore, is super-sensual. With no philosophical axe to grind, one could just as well say, "Reason is the voice of God." And Kant's Critical Philosophy did end in religion. The faith in duty prescribed by categorical imperatives, which are supposed to be dictated by Reason, is the supreme moral value. Therefore, Kant rounded up his system with the declaration; "I have found it necessary to deny knowledge of God, freedom and immortality in order to find a place for faith."

Kant continued this attempt to reform religion by discovering moral sanctions for its ideas and ideals. His philosophy rationalised the dogmatic doctrines of incarnation, original sin and atonement; so historically, it completed the Reformation. Kant rejected their literal interpretation but justified them as symbols of the dual nature of man; literally and chronologically, they belonged to the phenomenal world, morally to the noumenal. He took up a reverential attitude towards religious rituals, ecclesiastical authority and the faith in punishment and reward, regard-

ing them as symbols of moral truth, He was predisposed to regard Church dogmas "as vehicles of eternal spiritual truths—husks to preserve an inner grain"—although he rejected them as dogmas. He paid reverence to the "outward vesture since that has served to bring to general acceptance a doctrine which really rests upon an authority within the the soul of man". Kant's all-shattering philosophy in its ethics, was inspired by the tradition of the "Revolt of the Angels", it rehabilitated religion by shifting its basis on dogmatic morality sanctioned by supersensual Reason. But at the same time, it was an attempt to shatter the intellectual and cultural values resurrected by the Revolt of Man" to inspire modern civilisation.

The German cult of *kultur* logically resulted from Kant's neo-dualism: —the doctrine of two worlds. What the Germans mean by *kultur* is something very different from culture as generally conceived.³ It is qualitatively different from civilisation. The latter is an experience of the phenomenal world, while *Kultur* is the creation of the mystic moral urge which belong to the supersensual world of the noumena. According to Kant Physical *kultur* is the product of the slow toil of education of the inner life and an individual shares in it as the member of a community. As such, culture of the Kantian (German) conception is antithetical to civilisation, which concerns only the physical existence of mankind; *Kultur*, on the contrary is the product of the inner spirit of a community. It is not to be had individually; it is the conquest of a "community devoted to duty"⁴.

In the reactionary mystic conception of culture as antithetical to civilisation, Kant agreed with Rousseau who idealised savagery. Culturally and temperamentally Rousseau was a Calvinist; as such he also disowned the humanist tradition of the Renaissance. Therefore, though celebrated as the prophet of democracy, Rousseau too heralded collectivism. Rousseau's deification of Nature contributed considerably to the German notion that *kultur* was the creation of the soul of a community. Under the influence of Rousseau German romanticists also condemned "material" civilisation as morally corrupting and socially disruptive.

The distinction between civilisation and culture, and society and the State were the two characteristic features of the nineteenth century German Philosophy. The one followed logically from the other. Society as well as its material progress called civilisation, belong to the sensual world, culture and the State to the moral. Culture

being a matter of the mystic experience of the spirit of a community, its highest creation is the State conceived as a metaphysical moral entity. The mystic conception of the State remained rather nebulous with Kant, who could not entirely shake off the influence of the individualism of the eighteenth century. Taking up the threads of his thought, Hegel wove them into a political philosophy which raised the State to the exalted position of the supreme moral entity.

Kant's dualism was mitigated to the extent of allowing "the moral realm of freedom" to influence the "sensuous realm of nature". But the latter, being inferior, cannot affect the sovereignty of the former. Seizing upon this slender bridge between the two worlds of Kant, Fichte expounded his romantic doctrine of Will as the moral justification of aggressive nationalism and political authoritarianism, opposed to the cosmopolitan and political democratic spirit of the eighteenth century. Kant defined Will as the application of reason to action—an echo of the eighteenth harmony of rationalism and romanticism. Fichte reversed the relation, and declared that reason was the expression of the Will. The world of experience is the material created by the free, rational and moral ego to serve as the medium for the realisation of its Will. A rather naive subjective anticipation of the Hegelian picture of the world as the process of the self-realisation of the Absolute. Nevertheless, Fichte's doctrine of self-realisation through struggle which was another anticipation of Hegelian dialectics, could be derived from the Kantian belief that morality consists in the duty to struggle against the evils of human nature. So, through Fichte, Kantian morality backed up German nationalism against the cosmopolitan spirit of a humanist culture.

Interpreting Herder's humanist conception of the *Volksgeist* in the Kantian sense of culture, Fichte proclaimed that nature had endowed Germany with a mission. "The distinction between Germany and the rest of Europe is founded in nature".⁵ In order to accomplish the mission, the German people must attain moral unity in the State. The State is the organ of divinity which marks out a particular community from the generic humanity. The State being divine, the symbol of the moral personality of the nation, patriotism is religion. It is "the will that the purpose of the existence of humanity be first realised in the particular nation to which we ourselves belong, and that this achievement thence spread

over the entire race." The logical connection between *Kultur* and the State, implicit in Kant, became pronounced in Fichte's cultural nationalism. Fichte himself believed that he was continuing the mission of Luther and Kant by advocating the practice of their ideas.

One of the numerous curiosities of Marxist historicism is to hail Fichte as a herald of the proletarian philosophy because of his lowly parentage. In fact he was the philosopher of totalitarianism and prophet of national-Socialism. He preached spiritual imperialism. The German nation and the German State were destined to bring about a moral regeneration of mankind. Therefore, he exhorted the German people to "elevate" the German name to that of the most glorious among all the people, making this nation the regenerator of the world. Hark to our ancestors speaking to us; we in our time saved Germany from the Roman World Empire; yours is the greater fortune, you may establish once for all the corporeal might as the ruling thing of the world. There is no middle road; if you sink, so sinks with you the entire humanity without any hope of future restoration.

Fichte held that the State being a moral entity, its function included moral and material care of the nation as a whole. Property is not merely a physical possession; it signifies subordination of the physical world to Will; therefore, it is a means for the realisation of the moral purpose. With these arguments, Fichte advocated collective ownership through the State. His "Closed Industrial State" was a sort of State-Socialism; it was the advance picture of the National-Socialist State.

As an idealist, more so than Kant before and Hegel after him, Fichte was an ardent believer in absolute unity. The absolute in philosophy led to absoluteness in political theory. Thus Fichte provided philosophical justification for the authoritarian State, which again was a Lutheran heritage.

Hegel continued the movement of ideas started by Kant. "Although he often criticised Kant, his system could never have arisen if Kant had not existed".⁶ Hegel also philosophised the religious tradition of the Reformation. He inherited the religious bias of Kant. To Hegel, the substance of the doctrine of Protestant Christianity is identical with the truths of absolute philosophy.⁷ In political philosophy as well, Kant was the father of Hegel. The distinction between *Verstand* and *Vernunft* is originally Kantian: the

one is analytical though an empirical category, while the other is the absolute Universal Reason revealed in nature and in the organic process of human history.

Hume's critique of the concept of causality provoked Kant to a defence of rationalism. But, himself an empiricist in the beginning, he developed an extreme form of subjectivism. As regards this crucial problem in the history of philosophy, Hegel took up the task of combatting subjectivism in which Kant had failed. He rehabilitated philosophy by rescuing objective reality, and showing the individual the escape out of himself—from solipsism to universalism. A broader conception of Reason than of Kant was necessary to deal with Hume's scepticism convincingly and re-establish the unity of facts and values. The pivot of the Hegelian system, therefore, is a new logic.

Hegel's philosophy proposed to deal with an old problem aggravated by the progress of modern science; the apparent contradiction between the classical concept of the rational order of nature and the traditional religious belief and ethical doctrines. Rousseau had opposed moral-religious sentiments to science and the achievements of "material" civilisation.⁸ Kant was deeply impressed by Rousseau's romantic. Hegel shared the sympathy. At the same time, he was also impressed by the respect for tradition which Burke opposed to Rousseau's disruptive romanticism. Hegel's philosophy is an attempt to combine romanticism and conservatism in one system. The appropriate method was found in the idea progress through conflicts.

The dialectic interpretation of history led Hegel to the conclusion that conflict between nations was the motive force of human progress; the history of civilisation is the story of the rise and fall of successive national cultures. Hegelian dialectics also led to the Marxist doctrine that class struggle is the driving force of the history of civilisation. Therefore, Hegel must be recognised as the inspirer of the theory of proletarian revolution and Communism.⁹ At the same time, his glorification of the nation and the mystic conception of the all powerful State as the supreme moral entity culminated in Fascism.

The evolution of the Hegelian system was a purely mental process—of abstract ideas. It contained many faults, extravagances and absurdities. But Hegel was not consciously engaged in the fabrication of any particular ideology. An avowed enemy of sub-

jectivism and a stern realist,¹⁰ he did not live in a world of his imagination, but allowed his mind to take the impression of things as they were. Once the objective knowledge of realities crystallised into ideas, they evolved according to their logic.

In his youth Hegel, like all liberal minded people of the time, was enthusiastic about the French Revolution.¹¹ Together with Kant, Goethe and others, he admired Napoleon as the destroyer of mediaevalism and rejoiced at his victory over Prussia. In 1798 he wrote: "The silent acquiescence in things as they are, the hopelessness, the patient endurance of a vast overmastering fate, has turned hope to expectation, the will for something different. The vision of a better and a juster time has entered alive into the souls of men and a desire, a longing for a purer, freer condition has moved every heart and has alienated it from the existing state of affairs. Call this, if you like a fever paroxysm, but it will end either in death or in eliminating the cause of the disease."¹²

Hegel's political ideas began to take shape in an essay called the *"Constitution of Germany"*. Already his appeal was addressed to the collective will of the eighteenth century political philosophy. But even then he wrote: "How blind are they who can imagine that institutions, constitutions and laws can persist after they have ceased to be in accord with the morals, the needs and the purposes of mankind, and after the meaning has gone out of them; that forms in which understanding and feeling are no longer involved can retain the power to bind a nation". Having diagnosed the disease, the cure was prescribed; it was the rise of a State to symbolise national unity and national aspiration. Germany was divided; she was "no longer a State", as Hegel asserted. How, then, could she be a State? Hegel's political philosophy was the answer to the question of the time. It was not an empirical doctrine but a result of the "synthetic function of reason".

As a scholar, Hegel was originally concerned with the history of religion. Under Lessing's and Kant's influence, he took up the study of the origin of Christianity. The result was a life of Jesus as the son of Joseph and Mary, and rejection of the miraculous.¹³ Together with Schelling, he opposed the recrudescence of theology on the basis of Kant's postulation of immortality as the sanction for his ethics. Before long, he broke also with Schelling on the issue of the eternal, a doctrine supported also by Fichte. Having previously rejected Kant's rational moralising of theology, Hegel

blazed a new trail and found God's presence in the concrete life of humanity. As against the Jewish belief of Christianity that the "Son of God" bore the cross to atone for the sin of man, Hegel regarded Jesus as the archetype of the cosmic man who suffers, with a gentle smile at destiny. That was evidently a Socratic conception. Friendship with Hoelderlin had brought him under the influence of the Renaissance tradition which all along struggled in him with the legacy of Lutheran dogmatism and orthodoxy. Notwithstanding all the highly objectionable features of his system, the Renaissance tradition persisted as the under-current to inspire the religious criticism of the Young Hegelians.

It is quite possible that the study of the origin and rise of Christianity for the first time gave Hegel the idea of dialectic development. The humanist intellectual culture of Greece—thesis; breakdown of the antique civilisation and the consequent spread of frustration, pessimism and mystic escapism—antithesis; the rise of Christianity—synthesis. That would be a perfect Hegelian pattern. The conditions of Germany after the disruption of the Holy Roman Empire by the Treaty of Westphalia so very ably analysed in *"Constitution of Germany"* must have appeared to Hegel as strikingly similar to the atmosphere of disintegration, dismay and despair out of which Christianity rose. The doctrine of a *Volksgeist* preached by Lessing and Herder suggested the idea that, like the Jews in the past, the Germans were the chosen people. The belief in the mission of Germany to produce a new religion logically followed. It was the cult of the State as the highest moral entity "God walking on earth".

Referring the collapse of the Empire to the retention of feudal and religious animosities, Hegel visualised a reorganisation of Germany through the rise of a strong central authority. But it was not for the philosopher to play the statesman, not even the revolutionary. He could only describe life as it was, and foresee future development. Therefore, having described the given conditions, Hegel drew the outlines of the coming epoch in his *"Philosophy of Right (Law)"*. It was a rounded up system of moral and political ideas dominated by a mystic-metaphysical conception of the State. But Hegel's political philosophy was neither a worship of the established order, nor an idealisation of any peculiar form of State. Its *leitmotif* was appreciation of the value of organisation—the idea that liberty can never be dissociated from order, that a vital inter-

connection between the parts of the whole was a reality that could not be ignored in the moral pursuit of the common good. Hegel's doctrine of the State was Hobbesian; it was purely theoretical, applicable to any form of government—monarchist or republican, aristocratic or democratic.

In the introduction to his early essay on the "*Constitution of Germany*", Hegel had declared that his object was to promote an understanding of things as they were, to show that political history was not arbitrary but necessary. He held that unhappiness resulted from the experience of the discrepancy between the actual and the desirable, the ideal. When it is realised that what is, must be, men also realise that it is what ought to be. The germ of the famous dictum—"the real (actual) is the rational"—was already in its sprouting stage.

These germinal ideas of Hegel's youth were elaborated and logically worked out in the "*Philosophy of Right (Law)*". The basic thesis is that there is a contradiction between understanding (analytical idea) of abstract right and subjective morality; it is composed by the interaction of reason (as distinct from analytical thought) and objective will, which is freedom. Therefore, Hegel declared that the State was created by the synthetic function of reason.

In *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which presents the picture of Hegel's philosophy in the process of taking shape, the rise of intelligence is treated not as a subjective experience, but as taking place in historical epochs, national characteristics, forms of culture, and philosophical systems. It is the autobiography of the philosopher's mind. Hegel externalised, objectified, his own intellectual development, and came to the conclusion that it reflected objective reality and revealed objective truth. Hegel's philosophy, therefore, claimed to have been determined by the historical epoch of disintegration and struggle for reorganisation, the resulting national characteristic of the desire for a central authority, the tradition of German culture, and the religion of Christ as interpreted by Luther. It is human mind at last realising its true position in the Universe. It is Hegel's own history—from youthful romanticism to classical rationalism, from religion to philosophy—depicted as the objective process of the unfoldment of the Universal Spirit which the philosopher reproduced in himself.

Dealing with the relation of consciousness to reality, Hegel came to a conclusion which was a severe condemnation of subjectivism:

Isolated from the world, self-consciousness is shut out also from the stream of life. Reason is to realise this suicidal significance of an intellectual attitude which had stultified modern philosophy—a prisoner of self-contradictions. But reason, as analytical understanding, cannot bridge the gulf between reality and the ego imprisoned in self-consciousness. Unable to impose on the world of reality, as distinct from the world of subjective imagination, either the selfish (utilitarian) or humanist (naturalist) end, reason feels frustrated, and can only wait patiently for some mysterious power to give victory to righteousness. But the world goes on. Reason abandons the effort to mould it, and allows subjectivism to create a chaos, only reserving the right to step in to lay down precepts for composing the conflicts of individual actions. That was a critique of the romantic rationalism of the eighteenth century, and also of the Utilitarian-liberal doctrine about the function of the State. It logically led to collectivism.

When consciousness rises above the level of mere analytical understanding, and attains the spiritual stage of Reason, it is no longer isolated from the world. Dwelling in the community, it identifies itself with its surroundings. But to be identified with the concrete realities of life is still mere consciousness. Knowledge is yet to come. It is the picture of the primitive communal life. The spirit inspires, but does not reflect; morality is unconscious, spontaneous, the incentive being self-preservation. But culture grows and new ideals arise. Mind gradually emancipates itself from conventions and superstitions. Thus, the ground is prepared for the rule of Reason—of moral conscience. At this point, religion rises to teach that the world is subject to moral laws. The idea of God then passes through various stages—nature-worship, symbolism, etc. Finally, revealed religion establishes the unity of the concrete (man) with the absolute (God): "The spirit knowing itself as the spirit". That was Hegel's interpretation of Christ—the archetypal man. It is difficult to follow the tortuous Odyssey of Hegel's mind; but the journey's end presents an inspiring picture of the purpose of human existence. It is not to withdraw in the prison-house of subjectivism, but to march on the endless road of knowledge in search of truth—the unity of the Universe.

Phenomenology marked Hegel's break with the romantic school—Schelling, Hoelderlin, Fichte. Having outlined his philosophy, Hegel declared that such an attitude to life, the world, and

their problems, could have nothing to do with the aspirations of artistic souls. It disowned the idealism which thundered against the deficiencies of the world and craved for something more and better than reality. Philosophy, for Hegel, was the science of the actual world, and the actual was to be recognised as the real. Any other idea of reality was vain speculation.

Continuing his analysis of the dichotomy of reality and appearance, mind and matter, thought and being, Hegel argued that existence was not an immovable rock limiting the efforts of thought; that thought was implicit in existence, and, therefore, existence was a process of the unfoldment of ideas. But he was not a believer in "mind-stuff". He held that the physical nature and mind had a common origin, but were not its co-equal branches. He argued that mind could not be explained unless it was assumed that the potentialities of consciousness were inherent in physical nature. Hegel was a Spinozist and believed that the primeval matter was impregnated with spirit; or he could be credited with having anticipated the modern hypothesis of matter possessing "psychoïd" properties. The stuff out of which mind and matter emerge, Hegel called "the idea". But he would not invest it with the attribute of consciousness. Evidently, it was only a verbal jugglery. Earlier in the argument, Hegel had assumed that the potentiality of consciousness was always there. The potentiality must be potentiality of something. It existed in something which, therefore, could not be purely mental. However, Hegel related reality with consciousness. There is reality independent of individual consciousness; but reality independent of all minds is impossible. The latter proposition is logically unchallengeable; equally logically it grants priority to the potentiality of being conscious of reality. In other words, the history of the world within the reach of human comprehension must begin with thought; therefore it is natural for human vanity to assume that existence is limited by thought.

Hegel was concerned with the history of consciousness to which he gave different names on different occasions—thought, idea, spirit. Traditionally speaking, that is the scope of philosophy. By transcending the limits of the world of mind, philosophy becomes identical with science. Professional philosophers are not very likely to be so self-effacing. Therefore, as philosophy in the traditional sense, Hegel's system is logically consistent; and it would be unfair to expect more from a philosopher. Hegel stands the test in which

many others have failed.

In the traditional philosophic search for reality, Hegel was guided by the principle that ultimate reality must not be self-contradictory; that except the whole nothing could be completely and ultimately real. The result of his search was the organic conception of the Universe; the organic view of society and the State logically followed from his metaphysics.

The Universe is not a collection of self-sufficient units, such as atoms or monads, but an integrated organic whole. Therefore, the reality of finite things is apparent. But Hegel rejected the doctrine which sought to distinguish reality from appearance—the Kantian worlds of noumenon and phenomena. Hegel was scornful about the notion of the "thing-in-itself". He argued that, when we knew all the properties and aspects of a thing, we knew the thing-in-itself. The component units of the phenomenal world are also real, because they are aspects of the whole. The antithesis between essence and appearance is in Hegel nothing more than an antithesis of two human modes of conception. The phenomenon is defined as the appearance filled with essence, and reality is there where the phenomenon is the entire and adequate manifestation of essence.¹⁴

From this metaphysical premiss was deduced the famous Hegelian formula: "The real (actual) is the rational, and the rational is the real." Interpreted from the empiricist point of view, this cryptic formula may mean that whatever is, is right; and Hegel's philosophy be damned as an apology for the established order. Although since the passing of the Hegelian era this interpretation was generally accepted, Hegel himself obviated the possible misunderstanding by emphasising that what appears as fact to the empiricist is irrational, and, therefore, not real. The significance of a fact is different when it is viewed as an aspect of the whole; and so viewed, all facts participate in the essence of reality.

Unlike Kant's, Hegel's entire system is rigorously rational, so much so that it merges metaphysics into logic. The substance is contained in the two books on *Logic*. All his other works are applied philosophy, so to say. "Reason is the conscious certainty of being all reality." By virtue of being part of the whole, which is the complete and ultimate reality, everything is real. Rationality is to be conscious of this participation. Conversely, in proportion as one is conscious of this participation, he is more rational. That is the

transition to his philosophy of history, which is equally rationalistic. "The only thought which philosophy brings with it to the contemplation of history is the simple conception of Reason; that Reason is the sovereign of the world; that the history of the world, therefore, presents us with a rational process."¹⁵

A consistent rationalist of the classical tradition, Hegel held that the world was moving towards perfection. Therefore, the present must be taken as an approximation to the goal—greater than the past. The universe is a process of the Absolute unfolding itself in the rhythmic movement of thought.¹⁶ In the natural world, the process manifests itself in a series of materialised forces and forms of life; in the spiritual world, (the world of the mind), the Absolute unfolds itself as the human soul, the legal and material order of society, religion, art and philosophy.

Generalising his criticism of Kant, already in his youth Hegel came to the conclusion that problems of the relation between the Church and the State, law and morality, commerce and art, should not be treated in abstraction, but in their systematic inter-connection in the context of the totality of human life. This idea was developed in the *Philosophy of History*. Hegel's historical method of treating the problems of religion, philosophy, law and economics has been praised even by his critics. "If we consider only the influence of Hegel on the writing of history, specially with reference to the treatment of the history of civilisation, it must be admitted that, in his own way, he has mightily contributed to the advancement of science."¹⁷

The eighteenth century theory of progress was the empirical generalisation that study and research revealed the fact that ideas and institutions were not static. But Hume's consistent empiricism disputed the validity of inductive generalisation. The vacuum was filled by Hegel's rationalist interpretation of history. He maintained that his theory of history was not a generalisation of a fortuitous sequel of events; therefore, it was more profound than the eighteenth century idea of progress. It was based upon the discovery of a law of synthesis inherent in nature as well as in man's mind. That was Hegel's answer to Hume's dichotomy of facts and values; they are united by Reason which pervades nature and human mind. The eighteenth century mind was only analytical; it broke up the organic process of history into its component parts. Hegel believed that his logic showed how Reason could piece the parts

together into an underlying pattern with its law of development.

Hume's agnosticism had robbed the course of history of a logically necessary continuity, and consequently reduced the religious and moral values of civilisation to the level of social utility. To combat the sceptic's cult of chaos, Hegel took over Rousseau's conception of the General Will, and interpreted it as a vital spiritual principle of synthesis inherent not in individuals but in communities—a manifestation of a larger spiritual force that makes the core of reality itself. The unfolding of this eternal principle in things supplies a pattern of cosmic evolution and a plan for the development of civilisation in which each nation lives, and acts the part required by its relation with the whole. Hegel substituted the Natural Law by the rational unfolding of the Absolute in history.

Hegel completes Kant's unsuccessful endeavour to abolish the antithetical relation between law and morality by synthetising them in the ethical unity of the family and the State. The central theme of his *Philosophy of Right* is that mind is objectified in the institutions of law, family and State. Family is the instinctive realisation of moral life. That means rejection of the theory of social contract, although Hegel admits it in the Hobbesian sense when he says that by means of wider association of individuals and families, owing to private interests, the State rises as the home of the moral spirit where intimacy of inter-dependence is harmonised with the freedom of independent growth. The State is the consummation of man as a finite reality; it is the necessary point of departure for the spirit to rise to an absolute existence in the sphere of art, religion and philosophy. This simple meaning of this Hegelian jargon is to predicate culture on organisation.

Hegel maintained that no genuine conflict could ever exist between the individual and society to which he belonged. As the State is the highest possible moral value, it cannot mean negation of freedom. Hegel ridiculed the notion of private judgment which could be antagonistic to the State; nevertheless, he preferred the modern State to the ancient because the former had greater respect for individual freedom and the right of choice. He held that a higher concept of personal liberty was the basic contribution of Christianity to European civilisation. He admired the iconoclasts and admitted that the man who defended society at the dictate of his own conscience was the most valuable social force.

In Hegelian dialectics, negation is not absolute. The conflicting propositions—thesis and antithesis—are partly true, partly false. When the two are rationally judged, a third proposition emerges which is better than both. Hegel discovered this method of approximating truth step by step in the Platonic Dialogues and Socratic interrogations. The Greek word dialectic means conversation. It is the function of reason to combine the thesis and the antithesis in a synthesis. By its very nature, reason can never tolerate the finality of any contradiction. Otherwise, nature will not be fully rational. According to Hegel, the Universe as a whole is rational, and there can be no problem which is ultimately insoluble. Dialectics is intimately related with the Hegelian conception of reality. Therefore, his system merges metaphysics into logic. The result is the so-called Panlogism.

The Hegelian theory of State tries to reconcile the idea of individual freedom with the organic conception of society. As thesis and antithesis, both are right. The conflict, therefore, is apparent, unreal. Reason discovers the reality of harmony and unity. The Hegelian synthesis is not a compromise; it includes both the conflicting propositions completely in the result. Both are transcended and absorbed. The Hegelian State is not organic in the Aristotelian sense; it is metaphysical.

"The definition of right according to which what is fundamental, substantive and primary, is supposed to be the will of a single person in his own private self-will, not the absolute or rational will, involves a view which is devoid of any speculative thinking and is repudiated by the philosophic concept."¹⁸

Hegel regarded human will as an expression of the reason in nature. Consequently, there cannot be a multitude of individual will without a common denominator. Individualism, which does not presuppose a common human purpose, is bound to defeat itself by creating chaos instead of a harmonious social order. Human cooperation would be impossible unless there was a common element in human nature, common because it emerges out of the background of physical nature. The umbilical chord which binds every human being with mother nature is the common denominator of individual wills. Therefore, will is rational.

Hegel rejects the doctrine of social contract as an abstraction. The family is the empirical unit. The patriarchal and feudal State grows out of that origin. It is the thesis. The individualist society

(the bourgeois democratic State) is the antithesis. What is the synthesis? It is found in the conception of the State as an organism, in which the component parts consciously identify themselves with the whole.

Though approving the theory of General Will, Hegel questions the practice which led to Rousseau's democratic dictatorship. He rejected the method of ascertaining the General Will by counting votes, on the ground that in consequence of that practice the General Will became an "abstract particularity". The General will is not an arithmetical deduction; it is a rational category. And the rational is the real. Therefore, all individual resistance to the General Will is unreal. One might turn the table and argue that, since resistance is there, it is also rational. Hegel seems to have anticipated the possible report. The State is neither a simple organism nor a mechanism composed of individual parts. What is not there cannot be lost. Therefore, the individual does not lose anything when he surrenders his will to the General Will. He only acts rationally. If a defence of autocracy was the purpose of Hegel's somewhat belaboured rationalism, it was much more explicit in the mystic romanticism of the "prophet of democracy". Rousseau defended dictatorship for enforcing freedom with the following argument: The General Will is the real will, because by obeying it one realises his own nature.¹⁹

For Hegel politics was a rational, not empirical enquiry. *The Philosophy of Right* is only an "endeavour to apprehend and portray the State as something rational. As a work of philosophy, it must be poles apart from an attempt to construct a State as it should be. It can only show how the State, the universe of the ethical, is to be understood.

In contrast to this detached objectivity of the philosopher, Rousseau's political philosophy was prophetic; it had a message; it prescribed categorical imperativeness. "Whoever refuses to obey the General will shall be compelled to do so by the whole body. This means nothing less than that he will be forced to be free; for this is the condition which, by giving each citizen to his country, secures him against personal dependence."²⁰

Again, "If the State is a moral person whose life is in the common union of its members, and if the most important of its cares is the care of its own preservation, it must have a universal and compelling force in order to move and dispose each part as may be

most advantageous to the whole."²¹

Hegel did not take his lesson in philosophy from the Prussian King, but from the "prophet of democracy". The more correct judgement, however, will be that Hegel's theory of State was not made to order, but resulted logically from his metaphysics, in the realm of pure thought. And the organic conception of nature is as old as Aristotle, who inherited it from Plato. No unbiassed Student of history can miss the striking similarity between the Aristotelian and the Hegelian State. Aristotle regarded nature as a process of development from what is to what can be and should be. The end of the process, being a moral ideal, could be realised only in man. The State makes this moral development in man possible. Therefore, it is prior to the individual. "The proof that the State is a creation of nature and prior to the individual, is that the individual, when isolated, is not self-sufficing; and therefore he is like a part in relation to the whole."²² That is why "man by nature is a political animal"—the all too familiar Aristotelian dictum. The State enables man to be what he can be and should be; it is the precondition for man's attaining his moral and rational end. Logically, therefore, it is prior. An empirical absurdity was thus logically rationalised.

"The State is by nature clearly prior to the family and to the individual, since the whole is of necessity prior to parts."²³ The predicate is obviously false. Nevertheless, the Aristotelian theory of State ruled unchallenged for centuries, until Hobbes.²⁴ But it was rather the organic conception of society which dominated political thought in the Middle-Ages. The supreme authority was the Church, not the State. The political State came into prominence after the Reformation. In theology, Luther revolted against Aristotle, but took over his theory of the state. During the period of the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire, Erastianism gained ground, and glorification of the state became a tradition. As a Lutheran protestant, Hegel inherited that tradition, and combined the organic theory of state with the organic conception of nature in a rounded-up system of philosophy.

The teleological implication of classical rationalism of the seventeenth century came out prominently in Hegel's philosophy. It bears also the stamp of the eighteenth century thought. Hegel believed in the perfectibility of human nature. He visualised humanity in a continuous movement from a lower to a higher

stage, half a century before this inspiring perspective of history could be deduced from the knowledge of the process of biological evolution revealed by Darwin. Hegel held that all changes were in the direction of perfection. Nothing in Hegel prevents the identification of his World Spirit with the human spirit of creativeness. Hegel actually defines the World spirit also as a thing dwelling in the mind of man, and gave the thing a variety of names which do mystify it. But the seat of the mysterious thing is the human mind. So, Hegelian Reason can be conceived microcosmically as a biological function, and macrocosmically as the harmony of the Universe. If the World Spirit be seated in man's mind, how could there be any freedom of will? The question is irrelevant for Hegel's system. The supposed limitation of will is not harmful, because the movement is always upwards—towards freedom. But that is the most extreme version of Hegel's panlogism.

In reality, the position is not fatalistic. The mysterious power is in man's mind. The mind belongs to man. Therefore, man can control destiny, provided that he progressively rises to the realisation of his participation in the rational process of nature. This humanist under-current of the Hegelian system found its expression in the philosophy of Feuerbach.

The idealistic view of history places the hero in the centre of the stage; he is a demi-god, not bound by any law. The whole history of mankind is a composite biography of such great men. Hegel completely discarded this view. His philosophy of history makes no room for heroes, regarded as supermen or demi-gods. The role of heroes in history is only to serve as the vehicle of the spirit of the age; through history the unconscious social purpose becomes conscious, and is realised. In other words, great men do not make history; they are products of history.

This significant idea is quite explicit in Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*. Analysing the historical role of Julius Caesar, for example, he said: "It was not merely his private gain, but an unconscious impulse that occasioned the accomplishment of that for which the time was ripe." Then Hegel went on to generalise: "Such are all great historical men, whose own particular aims involved those larger issues which are the will of the World Spirit... Such individuals had no consciousness of the general idea they were unfolding while prosecuting those aims of theirs; on the con-

trary, they were practical political men. But at the same time, they were thinking men who had insight into the requirements of the time, what was ripe for development. This was the very Truth for their age, for their world."

Going back to the original source of the master's inspiration, the Young Hegelian Friedrich Strauss wrote his *Life of Jesus*, which daringly criticised the dogmas of Protestant Christianity which, since the days of Luther, had provided the moral sanction of the established authority. "With this book, Germany took up the path of the leader in that struggle which had begun in England and continued in France, for the application of free criticism to religious tradition. All those transitional standpoints that survived from the age of romanticism and older rationalism were broken on the critical question that henceforth predominated. The application of a cool and strictly rational criticism to the Bible and to ecclesiastical history belonged to the science of the new age, in which the practical and rational were everywhere asserting themselves."²⁵

Avowed opponent of reason and science, Lutheran dogmatism had circumscribed the spiritual outlook of Germany. A concerted attack on that bulwark of orthodoxy and conservatism was necessary for the liberation of the intellectual life of the country. That revolutionary role was played by the Young Hegelians, who represented the rationalist aspect of the master's teachings. Imitating the philosopher of the Enlightenment, they also heralded the revolution of 1848, which opened a new era in the history of Germany.

Feuerbach blazed the new trail. Like Hegel or Kant, he was a critical disciple of Hegel. On the basis of the positive kernel of the Hegelian system, he built up a new philosophy and called it the "*Philosophy of the Future*". In his immortal work, *The Essence of Christianity*, he went much further than Strauss and other Young Hegelians in religious criticism to declare that God and religion were creations of human imagination. Representing the spirit of the Renaissance, Feuerbach called upon men to cease to be "valets of His Heavenly Majesty", if they wanted freedom.

In the realm of pure philosophy, Feuerbach rejected the Hegelian concept of the Absolute as unnecessary. He held that a series of ideas, as products of philosophical activity, could replace the mystic category. Thus, in Feuerbach's philosophy, man becomes the creator of the Absolute. The corollary to this revision of Hegel's philosophy was to regard the material Universe as the starting

point of philosophy. It was really not a revision. Because, nature could not be conjured out of logic. A physical-realist view could be deduced directly from the Hegelian formula—the real is the rational. However, in Feuerbach's philosophy, thought becomes the result of organic conditions, and the organic conditions of human existence, in their turn, crystallise out of the entire process of physical nature. Therefore, thought cannot be self-contemplation of the ego; it has external reference. Philosophy at last came out of the vicious circle of subjectivism, and at the same time provided an objective rational basis for Humanism. The Hegelian system, thus, gave birth to a humanist naturalism.

NOTES

1. F.A. Lange, *History of Materialism*.
2. John Dewey, *German Philosophy and Politics*.
3. T.S. Eliot's *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* is an exception.
4. Politically, Kant was a democrat, an ardent defender of civil liberties. Nevertheless, true to the tradition of the Reformation, philosophically, he was the prophet of collectivism. To regard the Reformation as the prelude to the bourgeois revolution is evidently a wrong view of history. It provided sanction for individualism as well as collectivism. The dynamics of ideas, though having their roots in the physical being of man, cannot be fitted into a predetermined pattern of teleological historicism.
5. Fichte, *Address to the German Nation*.
6. Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*.
7. John Dewey, *German philosophy and Politics*.
8. "Rousseau allowed the heart to decide questions which the head left doubtful. From 1750 to 1794, the heart spoke louder and louder; at last, Thermidor put an end for a time to its ferocious pronouncements." (Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*).
9. The baselessness of the assertion that with Hegel dialectics was standing on its head, Marx put it back on its feet, will be shown in the next chapter.
10. So much so that Dewey had called him a "brutalist."
11. "For the first time since the sun appeared in the heavens, and the planets began to revolve around it, man took up his stand as a thinking animal and began to base his view of the world on reason" (Hegel).

As a student, he shared with Schelling a highly critical attitude towards the political and ecclesiastical lassitude of his country and subscribed to the doctrine of liberty and reason. There is a story that after the battle of Jena, the two young enthusiasts, Schelling and Hegel, one morning went out to the neighbouring forest and danced around a "tree of liberty" which they had planted there.

12. Hegel, *Ueber die Neuesten Innern Verhaeltnisse Wuerttemberg* (On the Latest Internal conditions of Werttemberg).
13. Wilhelm Dilthey, *Jugendgeschichte Hegel* (The History of Hegel's Youth).
14. Lange, *History of Materialism*.
15. Hegel, *Philosophy of History*.
16. Hegel, *Logic*.
17. Lange, *History of Materialism*.

"If our own historical writing no longer contents itself with the learned discovery and critical sifting of traditions, with the ordering and pragmatic exposition of facts, but above all seeks to understand the deep lying connection of events, and to take a large view of the historical development and the intellectual forces that govern it, this process is not last to be referred to the influence which Hegel's *Philosophy of History* has exercised even upon those who have never belonged to his school." (Zeller, *History of German Philosophy*.)

18. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*.
19. Rousseau as well as Hegel had inherited the Aristotelian doctrine of dual nature as the foundation of their political philosophies.
20. *Social Contract*.
21. *Ibid*.
22. Aristotle, *Politics*.
23. *Ibid*.
24. "I believe that scarcely anything can be more absurdly said in natural philosophy than that which is now called Aristotle's *Metaphysiques*. nor more repugnant to government than much of what he hath said in his *Politiques*; nor more ignorantly than a great part of his *Ethiques*." (Hobbes, *Leviathan*.)
25. Lange, *History of Materialism*.

Chapter XIX

HEGEL TO MARX

HERALDED BY the Age of Reason, the Great Revolution, however, was a mighty outburst of romanticism. The short interlude of post-revolutionary political as well as intellectual reaction was followed by a romantic revival culminating in the revolutionary movement which swept Europe in the middle of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, during the earlier decades of the century, Hegelian philosophy revived classical rationalism. Karl Marx combined the two currents of thought in his dialectical Materialism, which he proclaimed as a new philosophy—the ideology of the rising proletariat. It was claimed to be an entirely unprecedented type of philosophy, which was not the creation of pure contemplative thought, but a result of real life as lived in society. Disowning the vain pastime of interpreting the world, the new philosophy of action undertook the historic mission of remaking it. But even then it was not altogether new. Its fundamental principle was a plagiarisation of Goethe: "*Am Anfang war die Tat.*" (In the beginning was action). Moreover, if the true philosophy, as against the idle speculation of pure life experience actually lived in a particular period, then it could not precede the class whose experience it claimed to represent ideologically. In fact, Marxism was not a new philosophy at all.

Marx and Engels took over from Hegel much more than "the revolutionary side of his philosophy". The dialectic process of history can never be independent of the dynamics of thought. Therefore, the founders of dialectical Materialism inherited from Hegel a considerable element of Idealism together with the dialectical method. The feat of having reversed Hegelian dialectics so as to manufacture Materialism out of Idealism was a figment of imagination. As a matter of fact, there is little of essential difference between Hegel's idealistic conception of the evolutionary process

of history and the Marxist doctrine of historical determinism. Hegel's philosophy of history was essentially humanist. The dynamic concept of the Idea in dialectic relation to nature and history showed the escape out of the vicious circle of metaphysical speculations, and provided a basis for action with high ideals, for participation in the affairs of the secular world with the object of remaking it, and with the conviction that the thinking man had the power to do so. It is easy to see how this humanist core of Hegelian Idealism could become the point of departure of the materialist philosophy of action.

In order to break away from the idealist tradition, Engels traced the origin of thought to "matter-in-motion". Logically, he admitted, the two were coexistent in the process of biological evolution, and as such were bound to be mutually influenced and determined. Otherwise, man could not possibly be the maker of the social world. The ad hoc concept of matter-in-motion does improve upon the Newtonian natural philosophy which, notwithstanding its mechanistic view of the physical Universe, makes room for a *deus ex machina*. Nevertheless, as "Motion" (later on conceived as energy or the vital force), God interferes in the physical processes of the evolution of matter; in that case, man must be deprived of any creative power; and the Marxian philosophy of action would have no leg to stand on. Therefore, Marxist Materialism, to be a self-contained system of philosophical thought, necessarily, though not always explicitly, recognises the sovereignty of ideas, and admits that they are as real as physical and social processes. Rational Idealism, as distinct from theology and teleology, was logically bound to culminate in materialist monism; similarly, materialist philosophy must include recognition of the objective reality of ideas, with their own dynamics, if it is not to degenerate into vulgarity, or relapse into Newtonian natural philosophy, which makes room even for an anthropomorphic God.

It was Hegel who first expounded the doctrine of the identity of thought and being, which was taken over by Marx and Engels as one of the fundamental principles of their dialectical Materialism. It is an essentially idealistic doctrine. Identity of two things implies the notion of their coexistence. Physical being transcends the beginning of biological evolution. If thought is identical with being, then it must be admitted that consciousness, in which thought originates, is not conditional on life; that there is such a

thing as cosmic consciousness coexistent with the physical Universe. That admission, on the one hand, logically compelled by the doctrine of the identity of thought and being, thoughtlessly incorporated in Marxist Materialism, strikes at the root of materialist philosophy and, on the other hand, if the doctrine is that thought is identical with being, from a certain level of biological evolution, then it cancels the Marxist doctrine that ideological systems are mere superstructures of economic relations. In the context of materialist philosophy, which associates consciousness with life, and traces the origin of life in organic matter, the doctrine of the identity of thought and being only means that in the biological process of evolution, including social evolution and history, thought is coexistent with physical (social) being. With the doctrine, shared by both, Idealism flows into Materialism. The latter can replace the former as the philosophy of the contemporary and future world only by taking over the positive outcome of the entire past history of thought.

"We may say that Idealism itself lent assistance to Materialism in awakening the sense for the systematic working out of leading ideas, and in provoking by its very opposition the young and aspiring natural science." ¹ That is a correct appraisal of the influence of the Hegelian philosophy on the intellectual life of Germany in the middle of the nineteenth century. It broke the spell of the cultural chauvinism of Fichte and sobered the mystic romanticism of literature. The German mind again turned towards France for scientific and realistic inspiration. The recoil from romantic delirium and airy metaphysical speculations aroused interest in the study of natural sciences. The tendency, however, was not new. It had begun with Kant, "who in his pre-critical period not infrequently came very near to Materialism" (Lange). He began as a follower of Newton, and the Kant-Laplace theory was a landmark in the history of mechanistic cosmology. In metaphysics also, Kant was nearer to Materialism than Idealism. The concept of the thing-in-itself represented a recognition of the objective reality of the physical world. Of the two most significant pupils of Kant, Herder was not only inspired by the humanist tradition of the Renaissance, but also inherited the scientific mode of thought, while Fichte stormed into the emotional wilderness of romantic patriotism.

In the post-Hegelian years, under the impact of the revolutionary aspects of the philosopher's teachings, young Germany turned

back on rationalist classicism as well as poetic romanticism. The German *Aufklärung* was predominantly classicist, that is, conservative. In the post-Hegelian years, it was opposed by a revival of the scientific naturalism of the French Enlightenment. Spinoza survived the attack of Leibniz to influence the philosophical thought of post-Hegelian Germany; and Aristotle was replaced by Epicurus as the source of ancient wisdom. Expounded by Young Hegelians like Gutzkow, Mundt and Laube, Epicurean philosophy penetrated even the German Universities, until then the sanctum of theological orthodoxy and conservatism. A dissertation on Epicurus won for Marx the doctorate degree from the University of Bonn.

Religious criticism of the Young Hegelians inspired a struggle against the church and the Lutheran State. It was reinforced by the pioneering activities of great scientists like Liebig and Alexander von Humboldt. The one introduced the study of chemistry for the first time in a German University (Munich), while the other's young brother, Wilhelm von Humboldt, a philologist and humanist was instrumental in the founding of the University of Berlin, where Hegel taught philosophy. Learning from Cabanis and other famous French scientists, Johannes Mueller and Ernst Heinrich Weber spread the knowledge of physiology, particularly of the brain, which undermined the venerable doctrine of the immaterial soul, and thus prepared the ground for Karl Vogt, Moleschott and Buechner, who appeared as the exponents of Materialism.

"The most important effect was produced by the retiring idealistic flood-tide in the sphere of religion. The enthusiasm for pious romanticism and poetical ecclesiasticism disappeared."² Religious traditions and the annals of the Christian Church were subjected to the scrutiny of exact science on the authority of the Hegelian philosophy of history. To promote an intellectual revolt "against the increasing plague of authority",³ was the declared purpose of the Hegelian exponents of the eighteenth century Materialism which Marx rejected on the authority of Hegel.⁴

The religious controversy provoked by the literary works⁵ of the post-Hegelian German Materialists was reminiscent of the fierceness of the Reformation; only, this time, orthodoxy was combatted by scientists. Buechner's book created the greatest sensation and was vehemently condemned alike by idealist philosophers, conservative academicians, orthodox ecclesiasts and theologians. Marx's belaboured exposition of the inadequacies of "mecha-

nical Materialism" did not make his dialectic Materialism more acceptable to the opponents of the former. It was pointless. As a matter of fact, it weakened the efforts to pull down the ideological superstructure of the established order, as Marx would characterise theology and clerical learning, and placed Marx outside the current of progressive thought flowing from the realist metaphysics and rational-humanist historiology of the Hegelian system. Representing the democratic spirit of post-Hegelian scientific Materialism, Buechner, for example, wrote in the preface to his famous book: "It lies in the nature of philosophy that it should be a common property. Expositions which are not intelligible to an educated man are scarcely worth the ink they are printed with. Whatever is clearly conceived can be clearly expounded."⁶ The "mechanical Materialists" also wanted, as did Marx, to bring philosophy down from the clouds of speculative thought on this earth to reflect the experience of the realities of life. The last sentence of the passage quoted above meant a round rejection of philosophical systems dealing with abstractions such as the Universals of the Realists, extra-sensual categories of metaphysics and vague concepts about their nature.

Buechner "applied his rich and many-sided abilities partly to scientific enquiries, but partly to the popular exposition and appreciation from a social and political point of view of the results of our recent researches in physical science. Amid all his activity, he never lost sight of the mighty task of advancing humanity."⁷ Buechner as well as Moleschott rejected the concept of the Absolute and took up a relativist position in epistemology. The problem of the ultimate reality will never be solved; human mind should be satisfied with the truth revealed by empirical investigation, which does not allow the assumption of any supersensuous category. Whenever speculation tries to reach beyond the limits of experience, it involves philosophy in an inextricable maze of errors. Reason cannot follow faith. Philosophy must be guided by the natural sciences.⁸

Moleschott proposed to deal *de novo* with the relation between the subject and the object in knowledge. He doubted the Hegelian doctrine of the unity of thought and being, which logically led to the pantheistic conception of the identity of the human spirit with the Spirit of the Universe. On the other hand, he rejected the Kantian concept of the unknown and unknowable thing-in-itself.

"We know everything in relation to ourselves. This has been called a limited knowledge, human knowledge conditioned by the senses, a knowledge that merely observes the tree as it is to us: that is very little; we must know how the tree is in itself, so that we may no longer delude ourselves that it is as it appears to us. But where is the tree in itself? Does not all knowledge presuppose someone that knows? And consequently a relation between the object and the observer? If the two things exist, it is just as necessary for the tree as for the man that it stands to him in a relation that manifests itself by the impression upon his eye. It is simply by this relation that the tree is in itself. Because, the knowledge of the object resolves into the knowledge of the relation between itself and the observer, all knowledge is objective knowledge."⁹

The indispensable subjective element of knowledge does not destroy its objective validity. On the other hand, objective knowledge is not absolute knowledge. Knowledge derived empirically is objective, but necessarily relative. That was a "higher synthesis" which solved the problem of the relation between the subject and the object of knowledge. It resulted from the rigorously rational Hegelian system, which laid the twin phantoms of subjectivism and dualism which had haunted philosophy through the ages to rest. But it was not the negation of a negation; it resulted from a rational discrimination between the true and the false, the criterion of judgment being empirical as well as logical. The possibility of combining speculative Idealism and dogmatic Materialism into a philosophy more realistic than either was inherent in Hegel's all-embracing system.

The Materialism of the eighteenth century was defective because of the inadequacies of the then available scientific knowledge. In proportion as the latter expanded, materialist metaphysics and sensationalist epistemology and psychology could be freed from fallacies and inadequacies. That development of philosophy took place in consequence of the intellectual activities of the post-Hegelian period. The "mechanical" or "naive" Materialism of Vogt, Moleschott and Buechner was followed up by Lotze, a professor of philosophy at Goettingen, whose treatment of pathology and therapeutics as mechanical sciences dealt a staggering blow to the doctrine of the vital force. The authority of an objective academician encouraged young Heinrich Czolbe to publish his *Neue Darstellung des Sensationalismus*, in which empirical epistemology was

reinforced by a materialist metaphysics. The sensible presentation was resolved into matter and its motion; it was shown only as a regulative principle, matter being the metaphysical element. Czolbe's new exposition freed sensationalism from the solipsist fallacy, which persisted even after its improvement by Condillac and Helvetius. Locke as well as his French followers were inclined to refer spirit to matter. But a consistent sensationalist could just as well hold that, since only sensations are perceived, the notion of matter is superfluous. Consequently, subjective Idealism as well as agnosticism can logically follow from sensationalism, unless it transcends the limits of epistemology and arms itself with a metaphysics. Czolbe, with the help of biological knowledge acquired since the time of Locke, Condillac and Helvetius, improved sensationalism in that sense and merged it into Materialism, which consequently was also enriched.

"What in recent times Feuerbach, Vogt, Moleschott and others have accomplished, forms but suggestive and fragmentary asser-tions which, upon a deeper examination of the matter, leave us unsatisfied. As they have only generally maintained the possibility of explaining everything in a purely natural way, but have never attempted a more particular proof of this, they are still at bottom entirely on the ground of religion and a speculative philosophy which they attack."¹⁰

Czolbe's approach to the task of building materialist metaphysics was entirely free from dogmatism or unfounded assumptions. It was truly scientific. For the fundamental principle of his new exposition of sensationalism, namely, the exclusion, on the authority of physiological knowledge, of anything super-sensuous from the cognitive process, he did not claim any greater validity than that of a working hypothesis. "Without such an hypothesis (call it prejudice, if you please,) the forming of a view as to the connection of phenomena is altogether impossible. Besides internal and external experience, hypotheses are necessary in the forming of philosophy of things."¹¹ Czolbe further argues: Bacon had advanced philosophy by discarding the super-sensuous, the notion of the Final Cause. Since his time, evidence has been accumulated to support the method. Locke's exposition of the fiction of the vital force is the latest addition to the evidence. Why should we not finally discard the notion of transcendental forces?

Czolbe's new exposition improved sensationalism as regards

metaphysics and epistemology; its most significant contribution, however, was ethical. Czolbe's purpose was to formulate a humanist ethics by merging Materialism into natural philosophy. He believed that morality necessarily resulted from the good will which naturally developed in the intercourse of man with man.

Ethics had been the Achilles heel of all non-religious, non-transcendental systems of philosophy. The "happiness principle" of Locke did not improve matters. Utilitarian ethics, even as elaborated by Helvetius, logically led to the relativist morality of Bentham and his followers. Subsequently, it was taken over by Karl Marx, substantiating the contention that materialist philosophy cannot have an ethics. The problem of a secular, rationalist morality with an objective criterion for its value is still to be solved. The Epicurean tradition enabled the men of the Renaissance to ignore the problem. The scientific, humanist naturalism of the French Enlightenment gave some illuminating pointers. Czolbe found a more promising approach in the Hegelian system, which abolished the dichotomy of nature and spirit. Hegel's "view of the world's history makes the dualism of spirit and nature a great transitional stage between a lower stage and a higher, purer stage of unity—an idea which, on the one hand, retains the point of connection with the innermost motives of ecclesiastical doctrine, and on the other, has given rise to those exertions which have for their object the entire setting aside of all religion."¹²

Under the impact of this grand sweep of the Hegelian Idea, which went to the incredible extent of declaring that at a certain stage of the spiritual evolution of man, religion (belief in the super-sensuous) ceases to be rational and therefore, real, progressive and liberty-loving German minds looked beyond the narrow horizon of race and national consciousness, to find a vision of their future in "the free harmonious humanity of Hellenism and the self-supporting manliness of Roman antiquity" (David Strauss). Czolbe believed that sensationalism as expounded by himself, a synthesis of naturalism and Materialism, would be the philosophy of the future visualised by the Hegelian Strauss. Accordingly, he came to the following conclusion: "The so-called moral needs arising from dissatisfaction with our earthly life might just as properly be called immoral. It is, indeed, no proof of humility, but rather of arrogance and vanity, to improve upon the world we know by imagining a super-sensuous world, and to wish to exalt man into

a creature above nature by the addition of a super-sensuous part. Dissatisfaction with the world of phenomena is not a moral reason at all, but rather a moral weakness. The systematic development of true principle often demands much less acumen than the development of false ones; thus, sensationalism does not require a deeper and truer morality."

Later on, Czolbe declared that, just as the idea of a moral order immanent and inseparable from himself had compelled Rudolf Wagner to assume the immaterial soul, "in my case too, it is neither physiology nor the rational principle of the exclusion of the super-natural, but primarily the moral feeling of duty towards the natural world order and contentment with it, that compels me to the denial of a super-natural soul."¹³ There is a Kantian flavour in Czolbe's ethics; nevertheless, it makes the stimulating suggestion that the road towards a rationalist ethics, which can avoid the pitfalls of moral relativity or amorality, lies over a bridge to be built across the apparent gulf between physics and psychology.

Those intellectual efforts marking a highly significant stage in man's endless struggle for spiritual freedom were not appreciated by Marx, whose philosophy inherited rather the objectionable feature of the Hegelian system than its progressive and revolutionary tendencies. The philosophical foundation of Marxism (dialectical Materialism) was laid in the years preceding the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*. During that period Marx, ably seconded by Engels, carried on a bitter controversy with the Young Hegelians and the philosophical Radicals who called themselves "German Socialists"—all disciples of Feuerbach. In that controversy, which has become an integral part of the Marxist system, its founders defended Hegel against all his pupils who represented the materialistic and naturalist tendencies in his system against his mystic Idealism.

The implication of Hegel's memorable reference to the French Revolution as the first effort of man to be guided by reason¹⁴ was put in plain language by Heine. All the Hegelian Radicals—Young Hegelians and German Socialists—enthusiastically hailed the poet's discovery of the revolutionary implication of their master's teachings. Heine declared: If we can weaken people's faith in religions and traditions, we will make Germany a political force." The spirit of the Renaissance at last challenged the deep-rooted influence of the Reformation in Germany. David Strauss, Feuer-

bach, the Baur brothers, Moses Hess. Gutzkow, Mundt, Karl Gruen, Czolbe and a whole host of radical thinkers followed Hegel's lead.

In the earlier years of his career until he chose to assume the role of the prophet of an inevitable revolution, Marx also belonged to that distinguished company. In those early days, he believed that an industrially and politically backward country like Germany in the middle of the nineteenth century could contribute nothing to the advance of European civilisation except a philosophical understanding of human aspirations and historical processes. Yet, later on, he bitterly attacked the German Socialists exactly for holding this view.

Marx started his political career as the editor of the *Rheinsche Gazette*—an organ of the Hegelian liberal bourgeoisie. As a Liberal, he was critical of socialist ideas coming from France. In 1840, the Young Hegelian, Moses Hess returned from a visit to Paris full of enthusiasm for the sacred cause of the liberation of the "dehumanised humanity". Marx gave a sympathetic hearing to the glowing account of the socialist movement in France which had by that time reached its high water mark. But he pointed out that the socialist idea that society should be built from the bottom did not fit in the Hegelian dialectics of history; that the creation of a society free from the curses of money, profit and poverty presupposed self-negation of the established order; only then a higher synthesis could result from the negation of the negation. In other words, the society based on money, profit and poverty must be exhausted by itself to give birth to its antithesis (negation) as the indispensable precondition for its disappearance into the limbo of time; until then the true Hegelian must be guided by the dictum that the actual is rational. Where were the indispensable condition for a great change? Change does not happen simply because it is desirable, but of necessity. A revolutionary reconstruction of society is not a matter of human desire, human will, human aspiration and human endeavour; it takes place of necessity.

With these Hegelian arguments, which have subsequently been used by the conservative defenders of the status quo, Marx came to the conclusion that the Socialists had postulated the end of the system of money, profit and poverty without proving that it was inevitable. Therefore, he characterised the socialist movement which was inspired by the tradition of the French Revolution and the doctrines of earlier moralists, as utopian. However, compelled

by other considerations also, he agreed to go to Paris to study the socialist movement and its ideas. There he reached the second source of his system. Under the influence of the romantic tradition of the French movement, young Marx's political ideas began to outgrow the conservative implications of Hegel's philosophy and oriented him towards revolutionary activism. But even then his criticism of Hegel's political philosophy was not directed against the Hegelian State. Marx's conception of the State remained Hegelian; only it was to be established not by the German nation, but by the proletariat.¹⁵

As the would be prophet of an inevitable revolution, albeit to be brought about by the activities of the "real man, Marx went back on his early association with the Radical Hegelians and began a crusade against them with the weapon of Hegelian dialectics, which he claimed to have placed on its feet as the foundation of his new philosophy. Here is a recognition of the historical significance of the Hegelian Radicals, whom Marx fought with unfair means: "Towards the end of the thirties the cleavage in the (Hegelian) school became more and more apparent. The left wing, the so-called Young Hegelians, in their fight with the pietist, orthodox and feudal reactionaries, abandoned bit by bit that philosophical aristocratic reserve in regard to the burning questions of the day which up to that time had secured State toleration and even protection for their teachings. The fight was still carried on with philosophical weapons, but no longer for abstract philosophical aims. It turned directly on the destruction of traditional religion and of the existing State. At that time, however, politics was a very thorny field, and hence the main fight came to be directed against religion; this fight particularly since 1840, was also directly political. Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, published in 1835, had provided the first impulse."¹⁶

It was Feuerbach who first revolted against Hegelian idealism and blazed a new trail. He is generally recognised in the history of philosophy as the pioneer of the nineteenth century materialist revival. David Strauss shares the honour with him. Feuerbach was the first to reject the Hegelian conception of the dialectical process of history as the self-realisation of the Absolute Idea. Searching for the origin of idea, which undoubtedly was the motive power of history, Feuerbach located it in social anthropology. He came to the conclusion that physical nature preceded spirit; that

thought was determined by being, "I do not generate the object from the thought, but the thought from the object' and I hold that alone to be an object which has an existence beyond one's own brain."¹⁷ Feuerbach's *Philosophy of the Future*, therefore, came to be known as dialectical Materialism as against the dialectical Idealism of Hegel.

Though recognised as the founder of dialectical Materialism, Feuerbach would be more correctly described as an expounder of sensationalism of the eighteenth century tradition. He broadened the basis of sensibility by placing man in the context of nature as its integral part. In other words, he revived Humanism, and found the incentive in the Hegelian system. "The new philosophy makes man, including nature as the basis of man, the one universal and highest object of philosophy."¹⁸

Thus in Feuerbach's system anthropology and physiology are raised to the status of universal science. Until, then Materialism was based on physics; consequently, it could not be reconciled with Humanism, which concedes the highest importance to ethics. But unless the source of the sense of moral obligation can be located in the biological being of man, logic leads to super-naturalism, super-sensualism and irrationalism. Hence the baffling problem of harmonising a mechanistic cosmology, materialist (or realist) metaphysics and humanist ethics in an integral system of natural philosophy" as Engels characterised it. Breaking away from its admitted source of inspiration, the Marxian dialectical Materialism dehumanised humanity by subordinating its entire history, political, social, cultural and intellectual to a secular teleos, and rested an ill-conceived romantic view of life on a soulless mechanistic Materialism which it claimed to have rejected.

Feuerbach of course, did not hold that philosophical thought should be limited by the being and becoming of man. Because in that case, it would be identical with anthropology, history and sociology, "In this respect Feuerbach was an Hegelian and at bottom favoured with Hegel the principle of Protagoras that man is the measure of things. Truth with him means what is true for man; that is, what is apprehended with human senses. Hence, he declares that sensations have not merely anthropological but metaphysical meaning; that is, they are to be regarded not merely as fact in the individual man, but as proofs of the truth and reality of things."¹⁹

"The old philosophy started with the principle that the ego is an abstract, merely thinking being; the body is no part of it. The new philosophy on the other hand, begins with the principle: I am a real, a sensible being the body is part of my being; nay, the body is its totality, is my ego, is itself my essence...

"All our ideas spring from the senses, Idealism is, therefore, right in seeking in man the origin of ideas, but wrong in trying to derive them from isolated man, as a being existing for himself and fixed as a soul. Ideas arise only through communication, only out of converse of man to man. Not alone, but only by virtue of a duality we attain to ideas and to reason. Two human beings appertain to the production of man, of the spiritual as well as of the physical man, the community of man with man as the first principle and criterion of the true and the universal".²⁰

These rather aphoristic sentences summarise the entire philosophy of Feuerbach, which stimulated the historically significant intellectual efforts of all the Radical Hegelians. In the beginning, Marx was amongst them: but he began formulating his dialectical Materialism with a criticism of Feuerbach's materialist Humanism. That wrong start put an indelible stamp on the entire Marxist system.

The salient points of the Marxist criticism of Feuerbach are summarised in the Eleven Theses written by Marx himself in 1845, and subsequently (in 1886) elaborated by Engels in the pamphlet *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy*. The gravamen of that attack was Feuerbach's Humanism and humanisation of Materialism, so to say. A hitherto unpublished essay on Feuerbach by Marx himself is included in the book, the *German Ideology*, published in 1940 as a part of The Marxist-Leninist library, the caption "Feuerbach" seems to be an interpolation because in the manuscript the essay was entitled, "*Opposition of the Materialistic and Idealistic Outlook*" and it was a general dissertation on ideology. In the foreword to his book on Feuerbach, Engels refer to the unpublished essay (rather notes) of Marx and writes: "Since then, more than forty years have elapsed and Marx died without either of us having had an opportunity of returning to the subject. We have expressed ourselves in various places regarding our relation to Hegel, but no where in a comprehensive connected account. To Feuerbach, who after all in many respects forms an intermediate link between Hegelian philosophy

and our conception, we never returned." Engels adds, that his book, written in 1884, "was the first connected account of our relation to the Hegelian philosophy and a full acknowledgement of the influence of Feuerbach."

Having candidly admitted that Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity* "placed Materialism on the throne again," and that Marx himself "enthusiastically greeted the new conception," Engels proceeds to catalogue Feuerbach's faults. They are "deification of love" and contribution to the "spread of true Socialism like a plague in educated Germany since 1844. And why was "true Socialism" of the faithful followers of Feuerbach condemned as a plague? Because it maintained that a conception of free society superior to that of the British and French Socialists could be deduced from the "nature of man".

The spirit of the criticism can be sensed in the original scripture, which begins with the following: "As we hear from German ideologists, Germany has in the last years gone through an unparalleled revolution. The decomposition of the Hegelian philosophy which began with Strauss has developed into a universal ferment, which swept all the powers of the past. Principles outstep one another, heroes of mind overthrow each other with unheard of rapidity, and in the three years, 1842-45. more of the past was swept away than normally in three centuries. All this is supposed to have taken place in the realm of pure thought,"²¹

Marx was very proud of the historical sense of his philosophy. But the criticism with which he began formulating it, reveals a woeful lack of appreciation of the historical significance of a whole period of intellectual development. He wanted to assert the superiority of his philosophy—an immaculate conception of a whole system of ideology, which was, however, just a sucking on his thumbs, so to say, without any past but claiming the monopoly of the future. If he applied historical sense to the appraisal of his philosophy, he would be compelled to admit that he did not conceive one single idea, philosophical, political or economic, which had not been known previously; that, in short, his philosophy was only a continuation of past philosophies.²² Otherwise, his materialist interpretation of history, of society as well as philosophy would be untenable.

Marx's criticism of Feuerbach and his followers, as recorded in the unpublished manuscript now issued with the title "*German*

Ideology", is very fragmentary and incoherent. His only bias, at that time, (between 1844 and 1848), was to prove that Hegel was great and Karl Marx his only prophet; to deny that Socialism required any philosophical justification; and to disprove that there was any historical connection between the French Enlightenment and the post-Hegelian philosophical Radicalism.

That is how Marx began his ideological war. His completely negative attitude to the positive outcome of the Hegelian era is remarkable because it betrays a woeful lack of historical sense. His failure to grasp the historical significance of the religious mode of thought is also surprising. Because of that defect in his historical sense, Marx was unable to appreciate the importance of religious criticism. Religion provided the moral sanction for the continuation of the political and social *status quo*. To undermine its authority, therefore, was a revolutionary act of fundamental significance. The Young Hegelians did that. But Marx failed to appreciate the revolutionary significance of their bold attack on religious tradition and ecclesiastical orthodoxy. He scornfully dismissed their endeavour, which was a precondition for the revolt against the established order incited by Marx in the Communist Manifesto. "The entire body of German philosophical criticism from Strauss to Striner is confined to criticism of religious conceptions."²³ Undoubtedly, it was so, and therein lies the importance of the intellectual efforts of the Hegelian Radicals. In the tradition of the Renaissance, they raised the standard of a philosophical revolution, which was to create the ideological preconditions for political and social revolutions. But Marx did not really believe that man was the maker of his destiny; his view of history and social evolution was essentially teleological, fatalistic. Therefore, he combatted Feurbach's Humanism disseminated by his followers who called themselves "true Socialists", and developed by a succession of brilliant scientists.

The following statements, selected by Marx as the targets of his attack, contain the substance of the views of the followers of Feuerbach, which he (Marx) combatted, as opposed to his dialectical Materialism.

"The French arrived at Communism by way of politics; the Germans arrived at socialism by way of metaphysics, which eventually changed into anthropology, ultimately both are resolved in humanism."

"If nature recognises herself in me, then I recognise myself in nature. I see in her life my own life....Let us, then, give living expression to that with which nature has imbued us."

"To speak of Feuerbach is to speak of all philosophic labours from Bacon of Verulan up to the present; one defines at the same time the ultimate purpose and meaning of philosophy, one sees man as the final result of world history...We have gained man for ourselves, man who has divested himself of religion, of moribund thoughts, of all that is foreign to him with all their counterparts in the practical world; we have gained pure essential Man."

"In Communism, man is not conscious of his essence; his dependence is reduced by Communism to the lowest, the most brutal relationship, to dependence on crude matter—the separation of labour and enjoyment. Man does not attain to free moral activity.

"The only difference between Communism and the commercial world is that in Communism the complete alienation of real human property is to be in no way fortuitous, that is, is to be idealised."

"The Communists are particularly given to drawing up systems or ready-made social orders. All systems are, however, dogmatic and dictatorial."²⁴

The significance of Marx's dialectical Materialism can be deduced from the view denounced as its antithesis. To fight philosophical Radicalism which approached the problems of political revolutions and social reconstruction from the humanist point of view, Marx was compelled to defend his French and English forerunners of Socialism, whom he later on ridiculed as utopians.²⁵

Marx rejected Feuerbach's humanist Materialism on the ground that it regarded man as an isolated individual. The criticism was entirely uncalled for. "The individual man by himself does not contain the nature of man in himself, either in himself as a moral or as a thinking being. The nature of man is contained only in the community, in the unity of man with man. Isolation is finiteness and limitation; community is freedom and finality."²⁶ This is clear enough to prove that Feuerbach's Humanism did not deny the necessity of organisation; but being the logical outcome of man's age-long struggle for freedom, it would not subordinate the sovereign individual, the creator of the civilised society, to his creation, to an imaginary collective ego of the community. While Feuerbach really went further than Hegel, Marx took over his organic conception of society, which denies the possibility of indi-

vidual freedom.

The humanist conception of the individual as a sovereign moral entity is critically analysed by Marx in the *Theses on Feuerbach*. "Feuerbach resolves the essence of religion into the essence of man. But the essence of man is no abstraction inherent in separate individuals. In its reality, it is the ensemble of social relations..... (Sixth Thesis). The essence of religion is primitive rationalism; man creates gods as hypotheses for an explanation of natural phenomena. Because man is rational by nature, rationalism is the essence of man. To have discovered this real essence of man was a great advance in the struggle for freedom. The aggregate of social relations presupposes existence of individuals, who entered into relations. They did that because of their essence of rationality; obsessed with the Hegelian organic conception of society, Marx ignored the self-evident truth that society is an association of individuals. That obsession led him to take society as simply given, as if by Providence, and regard social relations as the ultimate reality. Social relations result from the activities of individuals constituting the society. Being human creations, they can be altered by man. Human will and human action are the primary factors of social existence.

The last point of the *Theses on Feuerbach*²⁷ contains the quintessence of Marxism. It is a declaration of faith in human creativeness. Thus rejecting Feuerbach's Humanism in favour of dialectical Materialism, Marx contradicted the essence of his activist philosophy: man is the maker of his destiny; in remaking the world, he remakes himself. The dialectic process does not leave any room for the greatest of revolutionaries, armed with the philosophy of Marxism, to change the world. The irreconcilable contradiction between dialectical Materialism and the programme of a revolutionary reconstruction of society is the basic fallacy of Marxism. Neither of the conflicting ideas originated with Marx. One was inherited from Hegel, and the other from the tradition of the French Revolution.

The historical significance of Marxism is that it was an attempt to harmonise the rationalist and the romantic views of life, which clashed at the time of the French Revolution and had pulled the subsequent intellectual and cultural history of Europe in two contrary directions. The harmony was latent in the Hegelian system, which incorporated the traditions of the Reformation, classical

rationalism, eighteenth century enlightenment, and also Rousseau's romanticism. Feuerbach's materialist Humanism and the philosophical Radicalism of his followers also tended to harmonise the rationalist and romantic views of life. Nevertheless, Marx combatted these latter schools because they rejected dialectics as an idealistic, teleological conception not compatible with the ideal of freedom. In its formative stage, Marxism was a defence of Hegelian Idealism as against the materialist naturalism which the Young Hegelians and the philosophical Radicals deduced from the system of the Master. The fascination for dialectics drove youthful Marx to reject the scientific naturalism of the eighteenth century as mechanical and unhistorical. The implication of his criticism was that the Enlightenment did not take a fatalistic view of history, but recognised the creative role of man.

In his controversy with the Young Hegelians and the followers of Feuerbach, Marx allowed no place to mental activity in the process of social evolution; indeed not even in the process of development of man himself. "Man can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, by religion, or anything else you like. They themselves begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence—a step which is conditioned by their physical organisation."²⁸ The brain indeed is a part of the physical organisation; and sensation and perception can be explained as physical functions. But conceptual thought is a purely mental phenomenon, and it distinguishes the most primitive man from the highest animal. The discovery of fire might have been an accidental physical act without any thought. But subsequent application of fire for the purposes of the most primitive human existence presupposes mental activity. Therefore, even a nodding acquaintance with anthropology should not permit the assertion quoted above.

Yet, mental activity is completely absent in the entire history of social evolution described in the subsequent pages, as if society was a lifeless machine. Indeed, it appears only at the tail-end of the process, "The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with material activity, and the material intercourse of men, the language of life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men, appear at this stage as the direct efflux of material behaviour." The first sentence is partially correct; the next one is altogether wrong. What is material

activity? If the adjective "material" is used for physical then it has some sense. But the physical activity of the most primitive man is conditional upon some mental activity. It may be very little differentiated from the physiological reaction to environment. Yet, it is something qualitatively different from the fall of a stone or the growth of a plant or the flight of a bird. Ideas and thoughts do not result from physical and social environments. The rather confused argument with wrong words and inaccurate descriptions led up to the conclusion that "life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life."

Later on, Marx reformulated the statement, meaningless in the original form, by using the word "being". that is to say, physical existence, instead of life. There is no causal connection between life and consciousness, one being an expression or property of the other. However, correctly formulated, the statement is the cardinal principle of scientific Materialism which fully recognises the role of mental, (including emotional) activities, and therefore, can be harmonised with Humanism, Consciousness is the foundation of these activities, and biology traces consciousness to a physical organisation of matter.

The eighteenth century Materialism, within the limits of the scientific knowledge of the time, attained this level, which could be the point of departure for further development in our time. Yet Marx discovered in the essentially idealistic Hegelian dialectics a surer and sounder foundation of his Historical Materialism. He rejected eighteenth century Materialism because it believed in something constant in human nature, from which the rights and duties of citizenship could be logically deduced. On the authority of Hegelian Idealism,²⁹ Marx denied that there was anything stable in human nature, and asserted that human nature "is the ensemble of social relations." The eighteenth century idea of human nature was defective; traditionally, it was deduced from the doctrine of Natural Law; scientifically, it was based upon pre-Darwinian biology, which still believed in unchanging species, and the classical dictum *natura non facit saltus*. Marx not only rejected it, but also combatted Darwinian gradualism, which contradicted his theory of revolution. The rejection of the eighteenth century belief in human nature thus was not brought about by a greater biological knowledge, but on the authority of Hegelian idealism.

Marx found in Hegelian dialectics philosophical support for his

theory of revolution. Therefore, dialectics became his sole criterion for judging all other philosophies; and dialectics is admittedly an idealistic conception. Revolutions are not brought about by men; they take place of necessity, that is to say, are predetermined. The dialectical Materialism of Marx, therefore, is Materialist only in name; dialectics being its cornerstone, it is essentially an idealistic system. No wonder that it disowned the heritage of the eighteenth century scientific naturalism and fought against the humanist Materialism of Feuerbach and his followers.

Although in the last analysis Marx rejected eighteenth century Materialism on the authority of Hegel, he did make an effort to criticise the philosophy of sensation. He held that mind was not a *tabula rasa*, passively receiving impressions; that sensations and perceptions were interactions of the subject and the object. In holding this view, Marx anticipated subsequent clarification of the problem of cognition in the light of biology, particularly physiology and psychology. The object is transformed in the process of being known; knowledge results from the subject acting upon the object. The emphasis is on action which practically rules out pure thought as an instrument for acquiring knowledge and discovering truths. Consequently, the foundation of Marxist Materialism is not matter, as conceived by science and philosophy ever since the time of Democritus; it is man's relation with matter. Again, an essentially idealistic position! Man, according to Marx, being a physical organisation, his relation to matter is the relation of one material entity to other material entities. Where does consciousness and intelligence appear in the interaction of dead matter? In other words, what makes man different from a lump of dead matter? Begging all these crucial questions, which materialism must answer to be convincing, Marx simply takes man for granted as an elementary undefinable, as the "personification" of the Hegelian Absolute Idea.

The "economic man", whose appearance coincides with the production of his means of subsistence, may be nothing more than the ensemble of social relations. But the human species has a much older history, which vanishes in the background of the process of subhuman biological evolution. Marx entirely ignored that entire process of the becoming of man before he entered into social relations. Consequently, Marx knows nothing of the human nature which underlies the ensemble of social relations, and induces men to enter into those relations.

That substratum of human nature is stable; otherwise the world of men could not be differentiated from the world of animals, ruled by the laws of the jungle. That rock bottom of human nature antedates the economic and political organisation of society. The origin of mind is to be traced in his physical and biological history. In that sense mental activities are determined in the earlier stages by physical existence and thereafter by social conditions. But the becoming of man involves the parallel process of mental and physical activities. The relation between the two is not that of causality, but of priority. From primitive consciousness mind evolves in the context of a biological organism. The latter being an organisation of matter, the priority of being must be conceded to matter.

Marx did not carry the analysis of mental phenomena far enough, beyond the dawn of social history. Therefore, on the one hand, his Materialism is dogmatic, unscientific and, on the other hand, the negation of a constant element in human nature leads to the negation of morality. Without the recognition of some permanent values, no ethics is possible. If they are not to be found in human nature, morality must have a transcendental sanction. The choice for Marxist Materialism, therefore, was between the negation of abiding moral values and relapse into religion. Theoretically, it chose the first, although in practice dogmatism eventually also put on it a stamp of religious fanaticism.

NOTES

1. Lange, *History of Materialism*.
2. Ibid.
3. Karl Vogt, *Pictures of Animal Life*.
4. "Karl Marx did not stop at the Materialism of the eighteenth century; he advanced philosophy. He enriched it with the acquisitions of German classical philosophy, specially of the Hegelian system." (Lenin, *Teachings of Karl Marx*).
5. Karl Vogt, *Picture of Animal Life and Koehler-Glaube und Wissenschaft*; Rudolf Wagner, *Letters on Physiology*; Moleschott, *Kreislauf des Lebens*; Buechner, *Kraft und Stoff*.
6. Buechner, *Kraft und Stoff*.
7. Lange, *History of Materialism*.
8. Buechner, *Natur und Geist*.
9. Moleschott, *Kreislauf des Lebens*.

10. Czolbe, *Neue Darstellung des Sensationalismus*.
11. Ibid.
12. Lange, *History of Materialism*.
13. Czolbe, *Die Grenzen und Ursprung der menschlichen Erkenntnis*.
14. See, footnote 11 to Chapter XVIII
15. As a matter of fact, Marx never quite outgrew the Hegelian faith in the mission of the Germans, if not of Germany. When the Prussian army was marching on Paris in 1870, in a letter to Engels, he wrote: "If the Prussians win, the centralisation of State power will subserve the centralisation of the German working class. German domination would furthermore shift the focus of the Western-European workers' movement from France to Germany, and you have merely to compare the movements in the two countries from 1866 up to now to see that the German working class is superior, both in theory and in organisation, to the French. Its supremacy over that of the French on the world stage would at once mean the supremacy of our idea over Proudhon's."
16. Engels, *Ludwig, Feuerbach*.
17. Feuerbach, *Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft*.
18. Ibid.
19. Lange, *History of Materialism*.
20. Feuerbach, *Philosophie der Zukunft*.
21. Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*.
22. Having given invaluable services to the human spirit, German Idealism declined, as though to give a new proof of its own theory, and to show by its own example that everything finite consists in the fact that it cancels itself and passes into its opposite. Ten years after Hegel's death, Materialism again appeared in the arena of philosophical development.

"The Marxist conception of history is really the legitimate product of the whole past development of historical ideas. It contains them all in so far as they have real value and gives them a firmer foundation than they ever had in any of their flourishing periods. It is, therefore, the fullest, most comprehensive, most adequate of all." (George Plekhanov, *History of Materialism*).
23. Karl Marx, *German Ideology*.
24. All the above passage were quoted by Marx in his unpublished manuscript now issued with the title *German Ideology*.
25. "These 'Socialists' or 'true Socialists', as they call themselves, consider foreign communist literature not as the expression of the products of a real movement, but merely as a set of theoretical writings; it has been evolved, they imagine, by a process of pure thought, after the fashion of the German philosophical systems. It never occurs to

them that even when these writings did preach a system, they spring from the practical needs, the whole conditions of life, of a particular class in particular countries." (Marx, *German Ideology*.)

26. Feuerbach, *Philosophie der Zukunft*.
27. "The philosophers have only interpreted the world differently; the point is to change it."
28. Karl Marx, *German Ideology*.
29. "There is nothing which is not an intermediate position between being and non-being." (Hegel).

Chapter XX

MARXISM

It was not as philosophy, but as a theory of revolution, that Marxism gained adherence, finally to become the ideology of a world movement. Marx proposed to make a science of Socialism. Hegelian dialectics was useful for the purpose. If, in so far as it is a philosophy, Marxism was an offshoot of the Hegelian system; as a theory of revolution it drew upon the doctrines and experiences of the "bourgeois" French Revolution. The most important part of Marxism is its economic analysis; in that respect its fundamental principles were taken over from the British political economists, who were characterised by Marx as ideologists of capitalism. So, Marxism itself contradicts the doctrine that ideologies are created by the economic necessities of particular classes with the object of promoting and defending their respective interests.

Philosophical principles, revolutionary political doctrines and economic theories which constituted the foundation of Marxism, had all been developed as integral parts of what Marx would call the bourgeois ideology,¹ to serve the interest of the capitalist class. They were created by men who did not belong to the working class, nor did any of them claim to be the champion of its interest, as did Marx who himself belonged to the middle class by birth, and was brought up as a bourgeois liberal intellectual. Yet, ideas conceived and developed by them went to feed what was called the ideology of the proletariat.

To attach class labels to ideas is evidently a false practice. Ideas are created by men, and as such belong to the entire race, and not to any particular class. They are, of course, not static; from the dawn of civilisation they have been in a continuous process of evolution, having been influenced by the natural and social conditions under which various human communities and classes lived in dif-

ferent parts of the world, in different epochs of history. But ideas have their autonomy and a logic which is not dialectical, but dynamic. Therefore, political doctrines of the bourgeois revolution, theories of the classical capitalist economics and the principles of the Hegelian philosophy could all go into the making of Marxism which called itself the ideology of the proletariat, but the positive elements of which will survive the proletarian revolution. Marxism was not a negation, nor a negation of a negation, of the older ideas that it took over. Without those ideas there could be no Marxism. Therefore, the laws of the dynamics of ideas cannot be called dialectical.

The materialist interpretation of history or the doctrine that social, political and cultural history is economically determined, did not begin with Marx, "The Marxist conception of history is really the legitimate product of the whole past development of historical ideas."²

The new Science of history was founded by the Catholic, Conservative Vico. The method of studying and writing history was revolutionised in the eighteenth century by Gibbon and other historians, although they did not theorise. Herder's anthropological and philosophical approach to the problems of historiology was an improvement on Vico. Finally, there was Hegel's philosophy of history; and the great French historians of the post-revolutionary period, Guizot, for example, wrote: "To understand political institutions, it is necessary to know the nature and relationship of property." Again, Society, its composition the manner and life of individuals in accordance with their social situation, the relation of the different classes of individuals, in short, the condition of the people, surely this is the first question to demand the attention of the historian who wishes to know how the people lived, and the publicist who wishes to know how they were governed,"³ Guizot applied this method in writing his history of France in the early Middle-Ages, In his history of the English Revolution, he introduced the idea of class struggle.

Augustin Thierry traced the "hidden cause" of political revolutions in the evolution of society. He regarded public opinion as the expression of the dominant social interest. It is interesting to recollect that in his youth Thierry was a Secretary of St. Simon, and must have taken from that "utopian" his lessons in the science of history. Mignet and other French liberal historians, not to men-

tion Michelet, went farther than Guizot and Thierry, to discover the spring of social evolution in economic relations.

The tradition of outspoken ideas can be traced to the great moralists of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. They all condemned the institution of private property and the resulting economic exploitation of the labouring classes, and held that the attainment of the ideals of liberty, equality and justice were conditional on common ownership. "Competition and rivalry, on the one hand, and on the other, conflict of interests, and always the concealed desire to make a profit at the expense of others, all these evils are the first effect of property and the inseparable accompaniment of rising inequality." This is not a quotation from the *Communist Manifesto*, but from Rousseau's *Discourse on Inequality*. Similar revolutionary sentiments had been preached by others who preceded the philosophers of the Enlightenment. Thomas More, Campanella, and Fenelon are famous names. Together with lesser lights, such as Morris, Bellamy, Cabet and others, they were utopians in the true sense of the much abused term. The moral worth of the Marxian "scientific Socialism" consists in its essentially utopian character. Coming to the early eighteenth century moralists, like Mably and Morelly, the unbiased historian meets the harbingers of Marxism.

Both were clegymen; Mably was a Platonist like all classical scholars of the Renaissance tradition. Flint has described him as the "forerunner of scientific Socialism". Mably perhaps was the first to declare that equality reigned in the first stage of society, and in its final stage equality would be restored. In a book written to combat the economic doctrine of the Physiocrats, he declared that private property was the root-cause of all human misfortune. The views expressed therein can be summarised as follows: The moment property is established, inequality becomes inevitable; the resulting conflict of interests brings in its train all the vices of wealth and all the vices of poverty, brutalisation of men's mind, corruption of civil manners, and much more, which is war. Anticipating Baboeuf's and Marx's theory of surplus value, Mably held that whatever the upper classes had in excess was obtained at the cost of others,

Mably's communistic doctrines were very popular decades before the French Revolution. He was followed by Morelly, whose famous book *Les Codes de la Nature, ou le Veritable Esprit de ses lois*

Tout Temps Neglige ou Meconnu, appeared anonymously in the same years as Rousseau's *Discours on Inequality*. The most novel part of the book is the chapter on a "Model of Legislation Conforming to the Intentions of Nature". Rejecting the Christian doctrine of the fall of man, as also the Hobbesian notion of man in the state of nature, Morelly held the belief that man was fundamentally good, and from that belief deduced a code of morality, quite novel for the time. He maintained that the wickedness of men was due to the social conditions, which resulted from the institution of private property. Therefore, he demanded the abolition of private property as the condition for the establishment of a social order in which liberty, justice and morality would prevail. Under such social circumstances, morality would be as simple and as evident as the axioms of mathematics.

The historical significance of Mably and Morelly is that Baboeuf was directly in their tradition and represented their communist doctrine in the field of practice. No serious Marxist with historical sense would disown Baboeuf as a forerunner of the revolutionary proletarian movements, and Baboeuf frankly admitted that he had drawn his inspiration from Mably and Morelly, particularly, *Le Code de Nature*. Baboeuf's disciple and biographer, Buonarrotti, was influenced by the ideas not only of Rousseau, but Mably also. Buonarrotti's dictum—"Equality is the essence of justice"—became the leit-motif of Proudhon's philosophy. Years before Marx wrote in the *Communist Manifesto* that "the history of society in the past is the history of war between classes", Buonarrotti described the French Revolution as a conflict between the supporters of wealth and distinction and the supporters of equality—the mass of workers. In another respect, he preached Marxism before the prophet of the proletarian revolution. He declared that social reform advocated by the eighteenth century moralists and philosophers could be achieved only through revolutionary conquest of power, in other words through armed uprising of the masses.

Louis Blanc preached other doctorines of Marxism also before Marx. His book *L'Organisation du Travail* published in 1840, calls for the establishment of an authoritarian State, which is described as the "realisation of the collective being", as the instrument of revolution. The idea of proletarian dictatorship in the transition period between the conquest of power and establishment of Socialism is clearly inherent in Blanc's theory of the revolutionary State.

He also visualised the Marxist utopia of the classless society, "One day, there will no longer be a lower class and an upper class, and on that day there will be no need for a protective authority; until that day, Socialism will not be made fruitful except by the way of politics."

With Blanqui, Marxism before Marx advanced yet another step. He discarded the moral attitude of Baboeuf and his followers,⁶ and prescribed a strategy for the establishment of the revolutionary dictatorship. The programme of the Blanquist dictatorship included (1) rupture with the bourgeoisie, (2) arming of the proletariat, (3) abolition of parliamentary election and dissolution of the National Assembly, (4) suppression of the bourgeois press and (5) drastic reorganisation of the State machinery.

Socialist theories thus grew out of the intellectual and political efforts to broaden the basis of democracy. Socialism rose not as the antithesis to democracy. The movement of thought from democracy to Socialism was not dialectic, but continuous. The incentive was the age-long human quest for freedom. The Great Revolution was completed in 1830 when the French bourgeoisie finally established themselves in power. Before long, all lovers of freedom and progress who still cherished the noble ideals of the eighteenth century, felt that for the people at large things had not changed much. Socialist ideas crystallised out of that intellectual and emotional ferment.⁷

Romanticists like Lamartine, Michelet and Victor Hugo contributed to that process of socialist ideas flowing logically from the democratic ideal. Catholic Liberalism developed into Christian Socialism, Lamennais, for example, argued; "Whence comes the evil in the material world? Is it from the ease of some? No; but from the deprivation of others, from the fact that through the laws made by the rich in the exclusive interest of the rich, almost they alone profit from the work of the poor, which becomes less and less fruitful." The argument led up to the declaration, "We must ensure that he who works shall share equitably in the product of his work."⁸

Socialist and communist ideas preached by a long succession of moralists and reformers since the seventeenth century⁹ were formulated in a system for the first time by Henri de Saint-Simon, who died in 1825. After the July revolution of 1830 the progressive bourgeoisie were attracted by the revolutionary social phi-

losophy of Saint-Simon, because it provided them with a powerful weapon to combat the reactionary political theories of Bonald de Maistre and others. Saint-Simon was the first to attempt an interpretation of social and political history in the light of the physical theories of Laplace and Cuvier. He took over Condorcet's philosophy of history, according to which the progress of society is subject to the same laws observable in individual development considered at once in a great number of individuals." Vico's cyclical interpretation of history also unmistakably influenced the social and political theories. All those influences and traditions of the past enabled Saint-Simon to come to the following conclusion: the imagination of poets has placed the Golden Age in the cradle of the human race. It was the age of iron they should have banished there. The Golden Age is not behind us, but in front of us; it is the perfection of the social order. Our fathers have not seen it; our children will arrive there one day; and it is for us to clear the way for them.

Saint-Simon did not fail to specify what should be done to prepare the way: "The most direct means of bettering the moral and physical lot of the majority of the population would be to classify as essential expenditure by the State those which are necessary in order to obtain work for all able-bodied men, in order to ensure their physical existence; those which have as an object to disseminate among the proletariat as quickly as possible newly acquired positive knowledge; and lastly those which can guarantee to individuals of this class the pleasures and joys necessary to develop their intelligence."

Before Marx, it was Saint-Simon who realised that only in the light of the analysis of its economic foundation could the historical importance and the possibilities of the modern industrial age be properly appraised. His pupil and biographer, Bazard, went deeper into the details of the economic organisation of contemporary society. As far back as 1829, he wrote about "the third emancipatory phase of history—the abolition of the proletariat, the transformation of wage-earners into companion, the first having made serfs out of slaves and the second wage-earners out of serfs."¹¹

The historical significance of Saint-Simon is made evident by the fact that men so very different as Adolphe Thiers and Auguste Comte were equally influenced by him. It has been held by com-

petent historians that Saint-Simon's Philosophy laid the foundation of Comte's Positivism. To have ridiculed such a philosophy as utopian was one of Marx's most blatant extravagances. On his death bed, Saint-Simon declared: "My whole life can be expressed in one thought: All men must be assured the freest development of their natural capacities."

In the case of Charles Fourier, it was his bitter experience of life that determined his moral approach to social problems. Therefore, the utopian Fourier could be called a personification of the Marxist doctrine of economic determinism. His chaotic life and erratic thinking have not left a deep mark on the history of the transition from Democracy to Socialism. Nevertheless, his moral approach to social problems has a lesson for our time. He was, however, a true utopian. "He is an echo, perhaps a caricaturing echo, of that greater voice from the eighteenth century, of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who also found that somehow the human race has taken the wrong turning."¹²

But the ideas of Fourier's leading disciple, Considerant, were much clearer and systematic, to the extent of anticipating the *Communist Manifesto* in certain respects. In 1843, Considerant wrote that the anarchic principle of free competition, which has resulted from the decay of mediaeval corporations and guilds, would in its turn lead to the rise of "the universal organisation of great monopolies in all branches of industry."¹³

As against the "utopia" of the forerunners of Socialism, Marx offered his "scientific Socialism. He criticised his predecessors because they had no knowledge of the proletariat; that they built out of their imagination fantastic pictures of a new social order that they appealed to morality; that, in short, they did not have a philosophy of history. An unbiased study of the pre-Marxian history of socialist thought shows that some of the charges against the Utopians were simply unfounded. As regards the charge of appealing to morality, they were guilty, but only from the Marxist point of view. For rejecting that appeal, Marxism was doomed to betray its professed ideas and ideals. The contention that "from the scientific point of view, this appeal to morality and justice does not help us an inch farther", was based upon a false notion of science.

As regards the other points of criticism, in the middle of the nineteenth century, the proletariat was a child of Marx's imagination;

those who did not share his fantasy, naturally, did not know anything about it.¹⁴ If they "constructed a new society out of their heads", so also did Marx. "Scientific Socialism" as well as dialectical Materialism were theories, and as such ideal creations. Marx distinguished himself from his predecessors by declaring that he wanted to proceed scientifically; nothing was to be taken for granted or deduced from preconceived notions. He would make inferences only from the empirical laws of social evolution and forces of modern society. He proposed to prove that Socialism was bound to come, as a "necessary product of historical development". The "evolutionary laws of history", which enabled him to found scientific Socialism and predict the inevitable advent of Communism, was the Hegelian notion of progress through conflict. It was certainly not an empirical law; it was a preconceived notion; and Scientific Socialism was derived from it. As a notion, it belonged to idealist philosophy, even when Marx's imagination put it on its feet. The result was that "the picture given at the end of *Capital*, Vol.I, answers to a conception arrived at by speculative Socialism in the forties."¹⁵ The picture conjured up in the *Communist Manifesto* is much more so. Marx had not yet hit upon his master-key of economic determinism. Later on, to elaborate the philosophical presuppositions of Marxism, Engels wrote that a particular economic phenomenon had already ceased to exist "when the moral consciousness of the masses declares it to be wrong."¹⁶ The idealism of the dialectic method cannot be suppressed. Moral consciousness is not an economic force. And Marxism, in so far as it was true to the tradition of man's age-long struggle for freedom, could not get away from the appeal to morality. Its historical significance lies in that fact. But the much vaunted historical sense failed Marx when he ridiculed his predecessors, and believed himself to be a prophet of immaculate conception, possessed of the light of revelation.

Utopia is an eschatological conception, and eschatology, the doctrine of the final goal, is as old as the human spirit; therefore, utopianism is equally old. Throughout the ages, it alternately assumed two main forms, prophetic and apocalyptic, both associated with religion, except in pagan Greece and in the age of the Renaissance. The decay of the religious mode of thought gradually secularised eschatology; the prophetic view of human destiny prevailed over the apocalyptic, placing will above faith. That was the origin of

modern utopianism, which was a declaration of faith in man's power to mould his own destiny. It was atavistic to oppose that declaration of the sovereignty and creativeness of man. The scientific Socialism of Marx also places before mankind the picture of a society; therefore, it is also a utopia; only, the goal will be reached not by human will and conscious human effort, but thanks to the development of the impersonal productive forces. Marxist utopia, thus, is apocalyptic; it is a relapse into fatalism: "The leap of humanity out of the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom". It may just as well be a leap into darkness, with the blind faith of finding light there.¹⁷

The error, if not insincerity, of Marx's rejection of the earlier socialist thought is proved by the fact that his whole fight against the German philosophical Radicals, who called themselves "true Socialists", was a defence of the utopianism of the French Socialists. The German Socialists, whom the founder of scientific Socialism vehemently combatted, characterised pre-Marxian Communism as utopian and maintained that, as against the empiricism of the French and English social reformers or revolutionaries, they reached Socialism scientifically.¹⁸

Marx poured scorn on the accused "true Socialists" because they opposed "the present society based upon external compulsion" with the idea of a free society based upon "the consciousness of man's inward nature, that is, upon reason." What was the source of this idea, which invited Marx's blistering sarcasm? Hegel had taught: "In furthering my own end, I further the generality of ends, which in turn furthers my end. Therefore, as a final consequence, we have the conscious unity of the individual with the general existence—harmony."¹⁹ As consistent Hegelians, the Radicals, followers of Feuerbach (German Socialists) inferred from the Master's teaching: "Organic society has as its basis universal equality and develops, through the opposition of individuals to totality, towards unrestricted concord, towards the unity of individual with universal happiness, towards social harmony which is the reflection of universal harmony."

The scientific Socialism of Marx resulted from his Hegelian prejudice—a faith in dialectics. Socialism could never come except as the negation of a negation. Therefore, a scientific theory of Socialism must begin with the assumption (pending verification) that the capitalist social order contained its own antithesis. Scientific

Socialism, from the very beginning, therefore, was a fatalistic doctrine, even though the fatalism was secular. Marx mooted the idea of the inevitability of the breakdown of the capitalist society for the first time in 1844. "The system of trade and money making, of property and exploitation of human beings, leads to a breach in existing society which the old system is powerless to heal."²⁰ It was a dogmatic assertion, a bit of wishful thinking, in the tradition of earlier Socialists whom Marx called Utopians. Not even an attempt was made to prove the statement. Because, up to then Marx had no acquaintance with the "trivial" science of economics, his academic education having been philosophical and juristic. But the necessity of fitting the heralded advent of Socialism into the scheme of Hegelian dialectics persuaded the would-be prophet to take up economic studies with the firm conviction that evidence for the inevitability of the breakdown of the capitalist system would be found. Pending the discovery of the truth, he reaffirmed his faith in it for the sake of his controversy with Young Hegelians. "Private property in its economic movement advances towards its own dissolution through a development which is caused by the very nature of things, and which progress independently, unperceived by and against the will of private property."²¹

The discovery at last was made not in economic records, but in the Hegelian philosophy. Modern psychology since the time of Marx has discovered the force of predisposition in making the desired ideal, and even visual discoveries. All on a sudden, Marx was struck by an idea—why not conceive Hegel's "World Spirit" as the economic force? Then you have not only discovered, but also materialised, put it on its feet, the Great Force which drives humanity forward from negation to negation. The breakdown of the capitalist society is one of those negations, therefore, inevitable. The foundation of Marxism was laid; but it was Hegelianism applied to human history.²² "Imperceptibly, the dialectical movement of ideas is substituted for the dialectical movement of facts, and the real movement of facts is only considered so far as it is compatible with the movement of ideas."²³

"Without the philosophy of Hegel, scientific Socialism would never have come into existence."²⁴

Hegel's view about the role of great men in history²⁵ could be passed on as a quotation from Marx, provided that "historical

necessity" was written in place of the "World Spirit". If the term used by Hegel lent itself to an anthropomorphic interpretation, "historical necessity" can also be called a metaphysical conception, having a teleological connotation. Only the acumen of modern scholasticism could maintain that there is a difference between historical necessity and providential will. Referred, ultimately, to the revolutionary function of the new means of production, historical necessity has the connotation of predestination. The necessity of earning a livelihood with the greatest economy of energy may explain why and how new means of production are evolved. But that necessity is not a metaphysical force. It is felt by man; and it is man's effort which satisfies the necessity. The realisation of the necessity expresses itself in the will of man; will motivates action; and new means of production are created. Man proposes and also disposes. The Hegelian doctrine that freedom is the realisation of necessity provides the human dynamics to the Marxist theory of social evolution. Alternatively, evolution of the means of production will have to be regarded as a predetermined economic process, the final cause of which must be somewhere beyond the reach of human intelligence. In order to keep determinism within the bounds of human history, it is necessary to recognise the creative genius of man. Otherwise, the dictum that men makes history will be an euphemism. In other words, the dynamics of ideas, the unconscious purpose of society finding expression through thinking man, is the very essence of the organic view of history as expounded by Vico, Michelet and Marx.

In the same article, in which for the first time Marx advanced the theory of the inevitability of the collapse of the capitalist order and the advent of Socialism, he also for the first time advocated armed revolution for the overthrow of the established State and the social system. So, at its very conception, Marxism was self-contradictory. If the decay and disappearance of any social system was inevitable, a violent revolution for its overthrow was palpably unwarranted. Conversely, if the change had to be brought about by force, it was not inevitable. Because it could be prevented by the use of superior force.

Trying to combine rationalism, the view that history is a determined process, with the romantic view of life which declares the freedom of will, Marxist historiology contradicts itself. Not that the two cannot be combined; they are combined in Hegel's dia-

lectics. The notion of progress is a product of reason and romanticism. Nature is a rational system; so is society, because it is a part of nature, social evolution being a continuation of biological evolution. If the mechanistic view is not to be tampered with, then neither a *deus ex machina* should be allowed to wind up the clock of the evolution of the physical Universe, nor any conscious effort of man is to influence the unfolding of social forces. And the mechanistic view of the physical, biological and social evolutions is the very essence of Materialism.

The doctrine, whether of Vico or of Michelet or of Marx, that man is the maker of the social word, contradicts materialist philosophy, unless the mechanistic view of evolution is clearly differentiated from teleology; unless romanticism is reconciled with reason, and will (freedom) is fitted into the scheme of a determined evolutionary process. That can be done only by recognising the creative role of man, not as a mere cog in the wheel of a mechanistic process, determined by the development of the means of production, but as a sovereign force, a thinking being who creates the means of production. Otherwise, the rationalist concept of determinism cannot be distinguished from the teleological doctrine of predestination. The idea of freedom, the possibility of choice, distinguishes the one from the other. If the rationalist view of history precluded the romantic attitude to life, then there would be no room for revolutions in history, the concept of freedom should be written off as an empty ideal. Yet, according to Marxism, revolutions take place of necessity; they are historically necessary. The point of departure of the Marxist philosophy of action, the point where it is supposed to break off from the Idealism of Hegelian dialectics, is that man makes history. That is also the fundamental principle of romanticism. Unless this idealistic core of Marxism is clearly grasped, the romantic idea of revolution, to be brought about by human endeavour, cannot be harmonised with the rationalist view of progress, which is the essence of materialist philosophy.

The recognition of the decisive role played by thinking man, that is to say, by ideas, in historical processes, runs counter neither to the rationalist notion of progress nor to the mechanistic view of evolution. The harmony between the rationalist conception of progress and the romantic idea of revolution also takes place in the materialist philosophy, which is not a negation of Idealism, but

absorbs and goes beyond by tracing the roots of ideas in the rational scheme of nature. The thinking man acts upon the process of social evolution not as a *deus ex machina*; he is an integral part of the process. The human brain is also a means of production—of ideas, which motivate action to create history.

These philosophical implications of Marxism were not clearly thought out by its founders. Therefore, the Marxist view of history is vitiated by the contradiction between rationalism and the romantic notion of revolution. With his rationalism, which is the essence of materialist philosophy, Marx was a Humanist, and as such a romanticist. He combined, as Heinemann wrote, "the righteous fury of the great seers of his race, with the cold analytical power of Spinoza." A different personality could not be the prophet of revolution; because, any successful revolution is conditional on a combination of thought and action inspired by a harmony of rationalism and the romantic view of life.

The harmony is in the thesis that "philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it". This basic doctrine of the Marxist philosophy of revolution is a legacy of Renaissance Humanism, which saw the relation between history and philosophy. Inspired by the humanist tradition, Bacon in his *Advancement of Learning* emphasised on the necessity of shifting importance from precept to application, from theory to practice, from philosophy to history. Bacon, at the same time, was a rationalist, the exponent of inductive logic, which made Newtonian mechanistic natural philosophy possible. Inspired by Bacon's humanist approach to history, Vico's *Scienza Nuova* unfolded the romantic vista of humanity creating itself. The relation that connects Marx and Bacon can be traced backward through earlier phases in the history of philosophy.

Marxism, however, was not the first to believe in the inevitable advent of Socialism. The French "Utopians" and the British Communists held the belief and passionately preached it before Marx. But consistent in their belief, they anticipated a gradual, peaceful transformation. They also invoked science in support of their belief. Saint-Simon called his Socialism "the science of universal gravitation". Fourier named his, "the certain science." Proudhon was the most exasperating; he anticipated Marx and named his doctrine "scientific Socialism".²⁶ Therefore, Marx felt it necessary to write a whole book (*The Poverty of Philosophy*) to refute Proudhon's doc-

trine "*La Propriete c'est Vol.*" (property is theft).²⁷ Consistent with their belief in the inevitability of Socialism, the Utopians condemned revolution preached before Marx by many others since the time of Baboeuf.²⁸

On the other hand, Marx was also not the first to advocate violent overthrow of the established order. The example of the Great French Revolution had fired the imagination not only of the impatient political idealists but also of the liberal French historians of the nineteenth century who took class struggle for granted with the concomitant idea of bloodshed. Even Thiere wrote: "I repeat, war, that is, revolution, was essential. God gave justice to man only at the price of struggle."²⁹ Baboeuf's passionate appeal; to violence on the authority of the classical moralists survived the Napoleonic era and found considerable response in the period from 1830 to 1848. The Blanquists actually organised an armed insurrection. In Britain, the Chartist Movement had a powerful "Physical Force" wing led by Bronterre O'Brien, who preached the following doctrine: "We challenge the historians to quote one single instance in which the rich in any country or at any time have relinquished their power from love of justice or in consequence of appeal to their heart or to their conscience. Force, and only force, have ever converted them into humanitarians."³⁰

Marx called his forerunners "utopian romanticists", while he himself advocated the most extravagant form of romanticism, which had brought the Great Revolution to grief. Romanticism, as represented by its emphasis on human action, makes of Marxism a revolutionary doctrine. But at the same time, romanticism contradicts its basic philosophical principle inherited from Hegel, namely, rationalism. Dialectics is a rationalist notion; dialectical Materialism, therefore, is a rationalist notion and a rationalist philosophy. On the other hand, the appeal to violence, being an echo of the last phase of the Great Revolution, is a romantic extravagance. The two aspects of Marxism thus stand in the relation of thesis and antithesis. The synthesis is the statement that "by changing the world, man changes himself". In other words, man's ability to change the world, to expedite evolution through revolution, and the moral right to do so, result from the fact that man is a part of nature, which is a ceaseless process of change, a dialectic process, in the Hegelian language. But the world is greater than the greatest of men; and will always be so. Therefore, man's ability

to change it is limited by the axiom that the whole is greater than its part. By disregarding this self-evident truth, revolutionary activism becomes irrational and runs up against the law of nature and the nature of man. Then, revolution only mars the salutary and uninterrupted progress instead of being truly beneficial for mankind, as Godwin warned.

The revolutionary, therefore, must be modest; he should not aspire to make miracles. His philosophy of life should be a judicious synthesis of rationalism and romanticism. By laying too much emphasis on revolutionary action, Marxism tipped the scale on the side of irrationalism, to degenerate eventually into a faith. At the same time, the Marxian theory of revolution is cynical. Its basic dogma is that human beings are never motivated by moral impulses. By rejecting the belief that human nature by itself is sufficient cause for the endless progress of mankind, it declared that revolutionary action by determined minorities was the decisive factor of history. The Marxian interpretation of history and theory of revolution, thus, create the cult of supermen (the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat organised in the party), and opens up the perspective of dictatorship as the alternative to democracy.

In its economic aspect also, Marxism built upon ideas conceived and preached by others before Marx. And the more important of them did not approach economic problems from the proletarian point of view. As a matter of fact, the cardinal principles of the Marxian economics originated with the classical political economists. It is well known that the British theoretical Communists of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries anticipated, though in outline, practically every aspect of Marxian economics. But it is little known that in the middle of the seventeenth century, during the English Revolution, the Republican Harrington preached economic determinism. He held that the structure and function of a government were determined by social and economic forces. He explained not only the "religious revolution" under Henry VIII, but also the Wars of the Roses in economic terms. Referring to Hobbes's doctrine that law must be upheld by the sword, Harrington wrote: "The hand that holdeth the sword, is the militia of the nation; but an army is a beast that hath a great belly and must be fed; wherefore this will come, and unto what pastures you have, will come the balance of property without which the public sword is but a name or a mere spit-fire."³¹

In his famous work, Condorcet speaks of the productive forces as incentives for the developpment of human spirit. "The art of making weapons, preparing food, of making the instruments necessary for this preparation, of preserving for a short time the means of nourishment, of creating their food reserves for them, was the first characteristic feature which began to distinguish the human society from societies of other animal breeds."³² Soon after the French Revolution, Sismondi began the critique of capitalism in his famous book, *Nouveaux Principes d'Economie Politique ou de la Richesse dans ses Rapports avec la Population*, which has come down in history as a valuable contribution to classical political economy.

The origin of the labour theory of value can be traced in Locke's definition of property: Property arises from the fact that "man hath mixed his labour with the gifts of nature". Later on, "Adam Smith and David Ricardo laid the foundation of the labour theory of value. Marx continued their work. He rigidly proved and consistently developed their theory."³³ The idea of collective class interests and conflict of those interests was also inherent in classical political economy. A theory of distribution of rent, profit and wages presupposed that society was composed of classes instead of individuals.

The labour theory of value logically led to the theory of surplus value, which was expounded with great precision by the British theoretical Communists—all followers of the classical political economist Ricardo. Philosophically, they all professed radical Liberalism—"the ideology of the bourgeoisie". The fundamental principles of Marxist economics were worked out before Marx, in the social and philosophical atmosphere of "bourgeois Liberalism". That is a fact of great significance for an objective philosophy of history. The entire heritage of Marxism contradicts Marxist historiology.

Charles Hall was a physician. His profession made him acquainted with the life of the poor. He approached the problem of their life not from the class economic point of view, but from the ethical humanist one. Yet, he came to a conclusion which supported the theory of surplus value. "Eight-tenth of the people consume only one-eighth of the produce of their labour; hence one day in eight, or one hour in a day, is all the time the poor man is allowed to work for himself, his wife and his childfren. All the other days, all the other hours of the day, he works for other people."³⁴

William Thompson has been described as "the most eminent founder of scientific Socialism".³⁵ An utilitarian (bourgeois liberal) of the most uncompromising kind, he nevertheless declared: "Without labour there is no wealth; labour is the sole parent of wealth."³⁶

The list of those who anticipated the Marxist economic theories is long. In addition to the above, Thomas Hodgskin, John Gray and J.F. Bray deserve special mention. Gray held that "labour is the sole foundation of property, and that in fact all property is nothing more than accumulated labour."³⁷ Hodgskin's views are summarised in the following eloquent passage: "I am certain, however, that till the triumph of labour be complete; till productive industry alone be opulent; and till idleness alone be poor; till the admirable maxim that he who sows shall reap be solidly established; till the right of property shall be founded on principles of justice and not those of slavery; till man shall be held more in honour than the clod he treads on, or the machine he guides—there cannot and there ought not to be either peace on earth or goodwill amongst men."³⁸

And Bray has been described as "probably the most effective of English pre-Marxians—perhaps in places the most Marxian."³⁹

The positive value of Marxism can thus be fully appraised only in the context of its liberal tradition. Liberalism proclaimed the principle of individual freedom; but liberal practice nullified the principle by formalising it. Socialism promised the practice of the principle. Bernstein's contention that Socialism in practice would be organised Liberalism was not revisionist, but a true appreciation of the historical significance of Marxism.

The Marxist attitude towards ethical questions was also of the tradition of bourgeois Utilitarianism. Bentham had declared that sentimental and ascetic morality was of aristocratic origin, and, therefore, not valid in a different social and cultural atmosphere. The philosophical Radicals, however, approached moral problems from the individualist point of view. They disputed the morality of asking individuals to sacrifice for the interest of society. Deprecating the virtues of obedience and humility, they held that general prosperity and well-being were promoted only by the defence of individual rights and interests; moral order resulted necessarily from an equilibrium of interests. Marx rejected the liberating doctrine of individualism as a bourgeois abstraction, and conse-

quently also the individualist approach to moral problems. While the ethical relativism, of the utilitarians was rational, Marxian relativism, notwithstanding its appearance, is dogmatic, being a projection in the future of Hegelian moral positivism.

Marxism was not the product of the mind of one individual. It drew upon the totality of human thought and human activity of the three to four hundred years which preceded the time of Karl Marx. Since then, human knowledge has advanced considerably. The startling discoveries of modern physics appear to have knocked off the foundation of materialist philosophy. Some hypotheses of the nineteenth century physics have, indeed, proved to be false, and new facts have been discovered. The Marxian Materialism must be accordingly revised. There is nothing in the teachings of Karl Marx that prohibits such a revision necessitated by the advance of knowledge.

The philosophical significance of Marxism is that it offered a solution of the problem of dualism which had vitiated philosophy, ever since the speculations of the ancient forerunners of science about the origin of the world were overwhelmed by metaphysical assumptions. In course of time, the world was split up into two—one of mind and the other of matter; and ultimately, in the Cartesian system, philosophy came to the conclusion that there was no bridge over the gulf between the two. The corollary to the conclusion was doubt about the objective validity of knowledge acquired through the senses and denial of the reality of the physical world. Philosophy being the love of knowledge, by coming to the conclusion that knowledge is impossible, it committed suicide.

However, the tradition of physical realism of the ancient naturalist thinkers, who were the fathers of philosophy, and forerunners of science, was not altogether dead. Revived by philosophers like Gassendi and Hobbes, it inspired the "naive" Materialism of the eighteenth century, which accepted the mechanistic cosmology of Descartes while rejecting his psycho-physical parallelism. Misguided by his Hegelian schooling; Marx disowned the heritage of mechanistic naturalism and was carried away by the essentially idealistic concept of dialectics.

Nevertheless, his approach to the baffling problem of psycho-physical parallelism was more fruitful than the sensationalist epistemology of the eighteenth century Materialism. It was more

scientific than Kant's *a priori*ism. Marx regarded the problem as of relation—of priority and declared that consciousness was determined by being. The imaginary gulf between the worlds of mind and matter was bridged. He formulated the fundamental principle of materialist monism just when biology was not only blasting the venerable doctrine of the special creation of man, but discovering the physical origin of life itself. The theoretically ascertained fact that physico-chemical conditions under which life is known to exist did not obtain anywhere in the Universe until a comparatively recent time suggested that life was an emergent phenomenon. Consciousness being a property of life, the proposition that it is determined by being (physical existence) is a sound scientific proposition.

One step further, and the far-reaching significance of Marx's contribution to philosophical thought is clear: scientifically, mind presupposes the existence of life; therefore, the world of mind cannot be independent of the world of matter. They are but two aspects of the self-same world, one being antecedent to the other. Matter as a conceptual metaphysical category is the ultimate reality, capable of producing life. Consciousness, cognition, mind, ideas follow in course of biological evolution. The world of experience as a whole is real; transcendental reality is a figment of imagination. Mind as well as matter, the physical world as well as the world of thought and ideas, are equally real. But philosophy must have a realistic scientific understanding of their relation. Marx's contribution to this understanding won for him an outstanding place in the history of philosophy.

The alternative view about the origin of mind is to refer it to the immaterial soul; and it is mind so conceived that can be imagined to have a world of its own, qualitatively different from the world of matter. Postulating such an absolute dualism, philosophy leaves the ground of science and rationalism. The immaterial soul or disembodied spirit is an article of faith; it is not a logically conceived ontological category, much less a fact of experience.

The age-long struggle of philosophy (love of knowledge) to free itself from the domination of religion and theology, to which Descartes himself made a decisive contribution, culminated in the materialist naturalism (as distinct from natural religion) of the eighteenth century. Already, then, biology, though still in its infancy, showed that the Cartesian distinction between man and

animal was arbitrary, and thus emboldened philosophy to reject dualism by generalising the mechanistic concept. Locke's sensationalism as improved by Condillac reinforced the movement for the liberation of the human spirit from the venerable tradition of sublimated superstition and pious prejudices. The pseudoromantic reaction of the post-revolutionary period, together with the Hegelian interlude, disturbed the continuity of the movement.

Owing to the Hegelian association of his adolescence, Marx himself was not sufficiently aware of his spiritual ancestry. Under the influence of the Hegelian dialectics, he rejected eighteenth century Materialism as mechanical. At the same time, he disowned the humanist tradition of the earlier advocates of social justice, ridiculing them as Utopians. Though he thus believed that he was beginning from scratch, as the founder of a new philosophy and the prophet of revolution, Marx belonged to the intellectual lineage of Democritus, Epicurus, Lucretius, Bruno, Gassendi, Hobbes, Holbach, Diderot and Feuerbach, to mention only the most illustrious of them. His place in the history of philosophy, therefore, is no less significant and honourable than any one of his forerunners. Indeed, his contribution to the cause of human freedom was greater, because he had the advantage of living in an age when scientific knowledge could throw light on the old problems of philosophy.

To be able to offer a rational explanation of the world of experience, and to avoid the pitfalls of mysticism, philosophy must be monistic; monistic metaphysics does not preclude pluralism in the process of becoming; and only a materialist metaphysics (irrespective of the change in the concept of matter in physics) can be strictly monistic. Marx's proposition that consciousness is determined by being placed materialist metaphysics on a sound scientific foundation. His subsequent thought, particularly sociological, however, did not move in the direction indicated by the significant point of departure. Marxism, on the whole, is not true to its philosophical tradition. In sociology, it vulgarises Materialism to the extent of denying that basic moral values transcend space and time. With the impersonal concept of the forces of production, it introduces teleology in history, crassly contradicting its own belief that man is the maker of his destiny. The economic determinism of its historiography blasts the foundation of human freedom, because it precludes the possibility of man ever becoming free as an individual.

Yet, contemporary sociological thinking has been considerably influenced by the fallacious and erroneous doctrines of Marxism which do not logically follow from its philosophy.

In addition to the accumulated achievements of the age-long struggle of metaphysics against dualism, philosophically, Marxism inherited also the liberating tradition of Humanism. The two apparently conflicting trends of thought—mechanistic naturalism and romantic Humanism—harmonised in Feuerbach, who therefore could throw off the Hegelian influence more completely than Marx. Nevertheless, in Feuerbach's materialist Humanism, man remains an abstraction, veiled in mystery, an elementary, indefinable category, as simply given, to be taken for granted. The fiery prophet of social justice in Marx was more a Humanist than a Hegelian. But his critical mind did not miss the weakness of Feuerbach's Humanism and realised the necessity of explaining the being and becoming of man, if his sovereignty as the maker of his destiny was to be empirically established. It was in search of a rational foundation of the humanist view of life that Marx undertook his analytical study of history. At the same time, anthropology had discovered that the struggle for physical existence was the basic human urge—a biological heritage. Marx identified the primitive man's intelligent effort to earn a livelihood with the biological struggle for existence, and came to the conclusion that the origin of society and subsequent human development were economically motivated. The point of departure of the Marxist historiography was the mistake of confounding physical urge with economic motive.

For a considerable time after the origin of the species, *homo sapiens* were not moved by any economic motive, but by the biological urge of self-preservation. He earned the means of subsistence, and for the purpose devised primitive tools out of sheer physical necessity. Anthropological research does not show any economic motive in the human struggle for existence in the earlier stages of social evolution. What it does show is that the struggle for physical existence provides stimuli for mental development. Consciousness and other rudiments of mind are a biological heritage antecedent to the appearance of *homo sapiens*. Thus, further evolution is determined by the physical conditions of the being and becoming of man. But economic determinism of history from the origin of society cannot be logically deduced from that fact. In other

words, economic determinism is not a corollary to Materialism. Moreover, it is antagonistic to Humanism, because it subordinates man to the inexorable operation of the impersonal forces of production. In an economically determined society, man is not a producer, but a means of production.

Marx's effort to place Feuerbach's materialist Humanism on a rational foundation led to the exactly contrary consequence. Feuerbach's mystic abstraction was replaced by an economic automation; and the abstract conception was transferred from the debased man to society, which was endowed with a collective ego.

Marx's failure to work out a sociology consistent with materialist philosophy was due to his passion for social justice, inherited from his humanist predecessors, though he disdained them as Utopians. Marx, however, was not the dry-hearted mathematical prophet of history, as he has been celebrated by his followers, and as he might have believed himself to be. With a burning faith in revolution, he was a romanticist and as such a Humanist. The idea of revolution is a romantic idea, because it presupposes man's power to remake the world in which he lives. If purposeful human effort is left out of account, social development becomes a mechanistic evolutionary process, making no room for sudden great changes and occasionally accelerated tempo. As the prophet of revolution, Marx was a romanticist. He proclaimed his faith in the creativeness of man which, accelerating the process of evolution, brought about revolutions. Marx being a Humanist, the force of his theory of revolution was its moral appeal. Even his critics, who do not depart from objectivity, honour Marx for a passionate search for truth and intellectual honesty. Without a moral fervour of the highest degree, without an intense dislike for injustice, he could not undertake the lone fight to improve the lot of the oppressed and exploited.

One of the most impassioned fighters against cant and hypocrisy, Marx was a great moralist in the tradition of the ancient prophets of his race. His merciless exposition of the essence of capitalism was a severe moral condemnation. In the last analysis, *Capital* is a treatise on social ethics—a powerful protest against the servitude of the toiling majority. It may be presumed that Marx abstained deliberately from making the moral appeal of his economic theories explicit, because he hated the cant of the sanctimonious defenders of the established order of inequity. Neverthe-

less, it was as a moralist that he influenced history. Only his orthodox followers seem to be immune to that influence.

Marx talked of Socialism as "the kingdom of freedom", where man will be the master of his social environments. One who preached such a humanist doctrine could not be a worshipper at the shrine of an exacting collective ego, even of the proletariat. According to Marx, under Socialism human reason will overcome irrational forces which now tyrannise the life of man; as a rational being, man will control his destiny. Freed from the fallacy of economic determinism, the humanist, libertarian, moralist spirit of Marxism will go into the making of a new faith of our time. It is a part of the accumulated store of human heritage, which must be claimed by the builders of the future, who will not belong to any particular class.

In the absence of an adequate knowledge about the origin of life, in the past, Humanism could not be placed on a rational foundation. The advance of scientific knowledge since the middle of the nineteenth century, while compelling certain revisions of mechanistic cosmology and materialist metaphysics, contributed to the triumph of rationalist Humanism. The fact that life is found to be associated with dead matter in a particular state of organisation connects man, through the long process of biological evolution, with the background of the physical Universe. The supreme importance of man results from the fact that in him the physical process of becoming has reached the highest pitch so far. Humanism thus ceases to be a mystic and poetic view of life. Based on scientific knowledge, it can be integrated in the materialist general philosophy, and the latter, then, can be the foundation of a sociology which makes room for human creativeness and individual liberty without denying determinism; which reconciles reason with will; which shows that cooperation and organisation need not stifle the urge for freedom. Harmonised with Humanism, materialist philosophy can have an ethics whose values require no other sanction than man's innate rationality.

The positive elements of Marxism, freed from its fallacies and clarified in the light of greater scientific knowledge, are consistent with a more comprehensive philosophy, which can be called Integral or Radical Humanism: a philosophy which combines mechanistic cosmology, materialist metaphysics, secular rationalism and rationalist ethics to satisfy man's urge for freedom and

quest for truth, and also to guide his future action in pursuit of the ideals.

NOTES

1. "Marx was a genius who continued and completed the three main ideological currents of the nineteenth century, belonging to the three most advanced countries of mankind; classical German philosophy, classical English political economy and French Socialism, together with French revolutionary doctrines in general." (Lenin, *Teachings of Karl Marx*).
- "His teachings arose as a direct and immediate continuation of the teachings of the greatest representatives of philosophy, political economy and Socialism." (Lenin, *Three Sources and the Three Component Parts of Marxism*).
2. Plekhanov, *History of Materialism*.
3. Guizot, *L'Histoire de France*.
4. Robert Flint, *History of the Philosophy of History*.
5. Mably, *Doutes Propreés Aux Philosophes Economistes*.
6. While calling for revolutionary capture of power, Buonarroti made a reservation: "Before conferring the exercise of sovereignty on the people, the love of virtue must be taught." (*Conspiration pour L'Egalité*).
7. "It is fair to say that the tremendous historical significance of Communism was understood more quickly by the middle class than by the working class, who were primarily concerned. The middle class saw that Communism was the logical outcome of democracy.... The Political battles of the French Revolution showed that the middle classes, in fighting for their own conception of freedom, found in the end that they were fighting the very principles on which they had made their stand." (Francois Fejto, "Europe on the Eve of the Revolution", in *The Opening of an Era—1848*, edited by A.J.P. Taylor).
8. Felicite Lamennais, *Livre du Peuple*.
9. The tradition can be traced backward through the history of civilisation almost indefinitely.
10. Enfantin, *Doctrine de Saint-Simon*.
11. Martin Buber, *Paths in Utopia*.
12. Alexander Gray, *The Socialist Tradition*.
13. Quoted by Martin Buber in *Paths in Utopia*.
14. In his polemics against Proudhon, previous to the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx himself had realised that the forerunners of socialist thought could not have any knowledge of the proletariat, simply because it was not there. "These theoreticians are

utopians; they are driven to seek science in their own head, because things are not yet so far advanced that they need only give an account of what is happening under their eyes and make themselves its instruments." (*Poverty of Philosophy*)

Engels expressed the identical view thirty years later. "The founders of Socialism were utopians because they could not be anything else at the time when capitalist production was so little developed. They were compelled to construct the elements of a new society out of their heads, because they had not yet become generally visible in the old society." (*Anti-Duehring*).

Engels went farther to admit that scientific Socialism 'stood on the shoulder of men who, despite all their fantastic ideas and utopianism, must be counted among the most significant brains of all time, who anticipated with genius countless truths whose validity we can now prove scientifically." (*Peasant War in Germany*).

15. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 13th Edition.
16. Quoted by Ryazanov in his Introduction to the new edition of the *Communist Manifesto*.
17. "The polemics of Marx and Engels have resulted in the term utopian becoming used for a Socialism which appeals to reason, to justice, to the will of man, to remedy the maladjustments of society, instead of his merely acquiring an active awareness of what is dialectically brewing in the womb of industrialism." (Martin Buber, *Paths in Utopia*).
18. "Communism is French; Socialism is German. The French arrived at Communism by way of politics, the Germans arrived at Socialism by way of metaphysics, which eventually changed into anthropology. Ultimately, both are resolved in Humanism." (Quoted by Marx in *German Ideology* from *The Rhenish Annals, or Philosophy of True Socialism*).
19. Hegel, *Philosophy of Law*.
20. *Deutsch-Franzoesische Jahrbuecher*, edited by Arnold Ruegue.
21. *Holy Family*.
22. "Instead of making discoveries in the bowels of economics, he had discovered economics in the bowels of destiny." (Leopold Schwarzschild, *The Red Prussian*).
23. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 13th Edition.
24. Engels, *Peasant War in Germany*.
25. See Hegel on Julius Caesar.
26. The term utopia was also used by Proudhon before the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*. It does not appear in the first draft of the *Manifesto*, prepared by Engels. It was later introduced by Marx. In a letter to him, Proudhon wrote in 1884: "When the contradictions of Commonality and democracy, once revealed, have shared the fate

of the utopias of Saint-Simon and Fourier, then Socialism, rising to the level of science—this Socialism which is neither more nor less than political economy—will seize hold of society and drive it with irresistible force towards the next destination."

27. But previously, with reference to Proudhon's book on property, Marx had written: it "revolutionises political economy and makes a science of political economy possible for the first time." (*Holy Family*). .

Marx turned against Proudhon because the latter was opposed to collectivism and criticised Communism on that account. He also warned against the dogmatic tendency of Marx. He refused to be a party to a new system-building. "After we have cleared away all these a priori dogmatisms, let us not, for God's sake, think of tangling people up in doctrines in our turn. Let us not fall into the contradiction of our countryman Martin Luther, who, after having overthrown the Catholic theology, immediately set about founding a Protestant theology of his own...We stand in the van of a new movement; let us not make ourselves protagonists of a new intolerance, let us not act like apostles of a new religion, even if it is a religion of logic, a religion of reason." (*Letter to Karl Marx*).

28. "Revolutions, instead of being truly beneficial to mankind, answer no other purpose than that of marring the salutary and uninterrupted progress which might be expected to attend upon the political truth and social improvement." (William Godwin, *Political Justice*).
29. Thierry, *History of the French Revolution*.
30. *The Poor Man's Guardian*.
31. Harrington, *Oceana*.
32. *Tableau Historique*.
33. Lenin, *The Three Sources of Marxism*.
34. Charles Hall, *The Effects of Civilisation*.
35. Menger, *The Right to the Whole Produce of Labour*.
36. William Thompson, *Enquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth*.
37. John Gray, *Lectures on Human Happiness*.
38. Hodgskin, *Labour Defended*.
39. Gray, *Socialist Tradition*.

Chapter XXI

THE TWINS OF IRRATIONALISM

The magnificent achievements of the natural sciences silenced the outburst of irrationalism as represented by the post-revolutionary romantic movement in the earlier decades of the nineteenth century. Consequently, secular rationalism of the eighteenth century tradition reasserted itself as the guiding principle of the intellectual life of Europe—a philosophical as well as social thought. As a philosopher and a social scientist, Marx was a rationalist of the Hegelian and also of the English liberal school. At the same time, his noble passion for an early attainment of the humanist ideal of social justice generated impatience which discovered the short-cut of violent revolution.

In the beginning, Marxism tended towards a harmony of reason and romanticism. Had it developed consistently with its original philosophical premisses, which implied that the laws of social evolution did not preclude the freedom of human will and endeavour, Marxism might have rescued the idea of revolution from its traditional association with the romantic extravagance of zealous and the orgy of violence let loose by wilful minorities; it might have promoted a scientific humanist movement as heralded by Feuerbach and his followers, known as the German Philosophical Radicals. But the lure of a short-cut on the model of the Great Revolution induced Marx to go at a tangent, to become the fiery prophet of the coming revolution which would place the proletariat in power. He left the high-road of the rational and humanist thought built by generations of fighters for the spiritual and social liberation of man ever since the Renaissance, to sponsor a revolutionary movement which, guided by a self-contradictory theory, was bound to run into a blind alley. The Marxist neo-romanticism merged man into the masses and ascribed mystic powers to the latter.

Nevertheless, until the years preceding the first world war, the socialist movement, which professed Marxism as its creed, by and large, attached greater importance to its rationalist aspect and liberal tradition than to the pseudo-romanticism of the gospel of revolution. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the latter tendency gained ground, ultimately to triumph in the Russian Revolution, which appeared to be an empirical corroboration of the Marxist theory. In reality, however, it did not, because it took place in a country where the conditions for a revolution as anticipated by the prophet were very largely absent. Yet, the Marxist theory was interpreted to justify facts which were not historically determined, but brought about violently by a wilful minority in power. The contradictions of Marxism permitted such an interpretation, which placed a premium on irrationalism. With the communists, Marxism became a dogma which demanded blind faith, and the new faith naturally had to be reinforced by its casuistry. Communism became an irrational cult which attracted pseudo-romantics who did not by birth belong to the chosen people, namely, the proletariat.

A year after its unhistorical victory in Russia, the revolution failed in Germany, where it ought to have triumphed, if Marx was not a false prophet. After their defeat, the Communists found consolation in their faith that the decayed capitalist system was heading towards yet another imperialist war which guaranteed the ultimate success of the revolution. Their faith was rewarded by a large number of emotionally predisposed people, artists of all kinds, for example, joining the Communist Party, while previously Marxism of the rationalist tradition had attracted scientists, scholars and intellectuals, to champion the cause of the liberation of the proletariat. The communist faith in a new social order to be established by a violent revolution was pseudo-romanticism; it rejected the classical romantic passion for individual liberty in favour of a mystic belief in the power of the masses. Collectivist romanticism is a contradiction, the individual man is everything; the unlimited power to conquer and create is in him. As the prophet of revolution, Marx deviated from his original rationalist position; but the belief in economic determinism emasculated his romantic passion. The result was that reason and romanticism cancelled each other, and Marxism became a cult of collective irrationalism. The fallacies of Marxism with all its original high ideals

and good intentions, logically resulted in the evils of Communism in practice.

The more unreservedly irrational cult of Fascism or National-Socialism is said to have arisen as a reaction to communism. That is not true, because the roots of one as well as those of the other can be traced in the earlier movement of ideas.

Right up to the close of the Middle-Ages, man's struggle for freedom had centered around the problem of his relation with God. In the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, the age of the Renaissance, it entered a new phase, where the old problem was gradually replaced by the problem of man's relation with society—the relation between the individual and the State. It was an old problem which had taxed the genius of a Plato. But in the States of the modern world, with large populations and complicated socio-economic structures, the problem proved to be much more baffling than in the City Republics of ancient Greece. Ultimately, the idea of social contract promised a solution of the age-old problem.

Sovereignty of the individual was the fundamental problem of the liberal theory of contractual State. But parliamentary democracy (representative government) and *laissez faire* economy, in course of time, reduced the sovereignty of the individual to a constitutional fiction. Economic subjugation of a large majority of citizens made a mockery of the constitutional right of equality before the law and an empty formality of political democracy. Unable to reconcile these contradictions in practice with its social and political theories, Liberalism gradually abandoned the contractual conception of the State; the organic view gained ground providing moral and theoretical sanction to the subordination of the individual to the State. Regarded no longer as an artificial creation, but as a natural organism, the State was something much more than the mere sum total of its constituent parts, which could not exist by themselves, and therefore, were subservient to it. Collectivism thus resulted logically from the failure of liberalism to solve the problem of harmonising freedom with organisation.¹

It may be mentioned that in the liberal welfare State the workman is conceived as a "unit of earning capacity" (Beveridge). This idea of Marxist origin had found favour also with Bismarck.

The organic conception of the State and the consequent eclipse of the tradition of individualism by the new cult of collectivism appeared to find a scientific corroboration towards the end of the

nineteenth century in anthropology and social psychology. Previously, the Darwinian doctrine of the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest had been interpreted to justify the *laissez faire* economy, which had reduced sovereign individuals to helpless social atoms. The liberating doctrine of individualism was vulgarised to justify the law of the jungle—everybody for one's own self, the devil takes the hindmost. And under the prevailing social conditions the majority composed of atomised individuals could not possibly help themselves, and consequently, were delivered to the devil as the hindmost. The fortunate few claimed that their power and privilege were due to the law of nature, which favoured the fittest. The corollary to that vulgarisation of science was the undemocratic doctrine of the elite and the superman cult of the coming dictatorships.

In that psychological atmosphere of frustration, the mystic appeal of collectivism found a ready response from the masses. It was an appeal to emotions and, therefore, had to be reinforced by irrationalism. The other basic liberal principle of rationalism was discredited by the triumph of empiricism in philosophy and ethics, which glorified emotion against intelligence, intuition against knowledge, instinct against reason.

After Cudworth (1617-1688), who based ethics on a system of metaphysics, English ethics was divorced from philosophy. In his *Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutabile Morality*, Cudworth expounded an ethical system as an integral part of a general philosophy.² Thereafter, English ethical theories tended to be "practical", free from the speculation about any metaphysical source of values, which were, therefore, arbitrarily postulated. Thus isolated from a rational system of metaphysics moral philosophy regarded values as simply given to be judged by the principle of utility. The sanction for moral values was either religious or intuitive.³

Social and political theories must have a philosophical foundation, and no philosophy is possible without a metaphysics. The early liberal thought was preeminently philosophical, transferring its alliance from the traditional mystic-transcendental to a materialist-realist metaphysics. The possibility of discovering that Reason was a biological property, and thus an expression of the Natural Law in man, and consequently of a rationalist secular ethics, was inherent in that process of philosophical revolution. Hartely indicated the way which was further explored by Priest-

ley and Erasmus Darwin. Hartely held that Hume's scepticism did not necessarily follow from Locke's empiricist epistemology. But Hartley's claim to be a legitimate successor of Locks was disputed, and his elaboration of sensation rejected by the empiricists, because it tended towards Materialism. Owing to the reluctance to accept the logical development of the philosophy of its founders, Liberalism came under the influence of the philosophical reaction. The prejudice against Materialism drove empirical philosophy into the blind-alley of scepticism.

Developing on the background of a conflict between the traditions of Renaissance and Reformation, Liberalism from the time of Locke, became philosophically confused. Through Hooker, who could be called the earliest forerunner of Neo-Thomism, the tradition of the Reformaion predominated in Liberalism as formulated by Locke. Transplanted in the scientific rationalist atmosphere of eighteenth century France, it outgrew the pietism of Locke and the naturalist tradition of the Renaissance reasserted itself in its philosophy. Locke's sensationalist theory of the other hand, led to the subjective idealism of Berkeley and agnosticism of Hume. Though apparently so very different, both exposed the fatal inadequacy of empiricist philosophy—fatal, because it was pregnant with the danger of a philosophical reaction. Locke proposed to ascertain the limits of human knowledge, and came to the conclusion that nothing beyond the reach of the senses could be known. The implication is palpable: why bother about the objective reality? At its very birth empirical philosophy denied metaphysics.

Berkeley, in a straight forward manner, went directly to the point: The reality of the external world cannot be proved by experience; therefore, in order to avoid the absurdity of solipsism, philosophy must postulate God as the ultimate reality. Empiricism thus brought philosophy back to a mystic-transcendental metaphysics, and beyond, to a fundamentalist religion with faith in a personal God.

The significance of Hume's scepticism was negation of the possibility of a realist (materialist) metaphysics. But his agnostic attitude towards the supersensuous did not necessarily imply negation of God. As a matter of fact he explicitly differentiated his attitude from atheism. The famous story of his first meeting with the French Encyclopedists is to the point. In course of conversation, he remarked that he was yet to meet a confirmed atheist.

Thereupon, Diderot retorted: "Sir, here you are with nine of them". If philosophy cannot discover the ultimate reality, man must revert to religion in search of it. Agnosticism sets an absolute limit to human knowledge and declares implicitly that knowledge of truth and reality is impossible.⁴ It is a sophisticated cult of ignorance,⁵ and ignorance is the foundation of faith. Therefore, it has been held by critical historians of philosophy that Hume's agnosticism created an intellectual atmosphere congenial to religious revivalism. That is the logical consequence of empiricism in philosophy. When insufficiency of the explanation of mental phenomena and causality is pointed out as the demonstration of the impossibility of all explanation, it amounts to the suggestion that further enquiry should stop because it is fruitless. It is easy to see how at that dead end intuition can replace experience, and empiricism opens the way to mysticism. Wedded to the empirical philosophy, even after Berkeley had taken it to the temple of God, and Hume had exposed its absurdity, Liberalism could not but embrace the so-called natural religion and move towards irrationalism.⁶

The *Natural History of Religion* exposed the fiction of the venerable conception of soul; but the material world also went with it. What remained was atomised "ideas" with no cohesion or rational connection. The world of experience, of our sensations, is the only world; but it is an ideal and irrational world. There being no necessary connection between phenomena, anything may happen anywhere any time. That is to say, the world of the empiricist is a world of miracles, which cannot be without a miracle-making God, an almighty who can create out of nothing. Dugald Stewart brought out this implication of Hume's agnosticism. He was a follower of Reid who opposed Hume's scepticism with his "commonsense" realism. Dugald Stewart proved that Hume's doctrine really led to theology, implying that God gives us the conviction of the necessity of a cause. But Hume argues that it can never be a logical necessity. Dugald Stewart retorts that it must then be either a prejudice or an intuitive judgment; and in either case it is an a priori belief, which is the essence of religion.

Noting that enlightened zeal for liberty was associated with the reckless boldness of the uncompromising free-thinker, Stewart tried to show that a man could be a Liberal without being an atheist.⁷ Paley held that psychology proved existence of a design

in the moral world (see *Natural Theology*). He agreed with Bentham that that action was good which made for the greatest good for the greatest number. But following the religious utilitarians of the previous century, he laid emphasis on the doctrine of reward and punishment after death.

Under Hume's influence, although politically he was a Tory, Liberalism in Britain broke away from its philosophical moorings.⁸ Individualism degenerated into sheer selfishness. The doctrine that each man should first attend to his own interest was justified by a venerable cant: "It was a proof of a providential order that each man, by helping himself unintentionally helps his neighbours" (Adam Smith). The notion of a Providential Order rules out man's claim to be the maker of his destiny. It is not consistent with the humanist philosophical principle of individualism, which proclaims the sovereignty of man. Once it is admitted that the world is a providential Order, the idea of man's liberty becomes meaningless. The established social and political order being a part of the world is also providentially ordained. How could man ever alter it? Philosophical reaction thus reduced the social and political doctrine of modern liberalism to mere conventional declarations.

"Practical men, asking whether this or that policy shall be adopted in view of actual events, no more want to go back to right reason and law of nature. The order, only established by experience and tradition was accepted subject to criticism of detail, and men turned impatiently from abstract arguments, and left the enquiry into social contracts to philosophers, that is, to silly people in libraries. Politics was properly a matter of business, to be discussed in a businesslike spirit. In this sense, individualism is congenial to empiricism, because it starts from facts and particular interests, and resents the intrusion of first principle."⁹

To accept the order established by tradition as sacrosanct, was to vindicate the Toryism of Burke. The addition of the term "experience", made no essential difference. Having deviated from its philosophical tradition, liberalism thus committed suicide. The funeral oration was delivered by the so-called neo-liberal philosophers, who expounded the organic theory of the State, which meant negation of individualism.

The corollary was a recrudescence of irrationalism in philosophy. The attempt to apply scientific methods to the study of social

phenomena encouraged renewed revolt against reason in the closing years of the nineteenth century.¹⁰ Applied to social evolution, the doctrines of Darwin were interpreted differently, either in favour of individualism or of collectivism. Scientists sought the truth in an empirical study of the anatomy and physiology of the human mind. It led to researches into primitive human institutions of the present as well as of the past. The result was the development of two new sciences—anthropology and social psychology. The mass of data about the social organisation and behaviour of primitive people gathered by the investigations of Frazer, Westermarck, Hobhouse, Rivers and many others appeared to cast doubt on the validity of the rationalist social and political theories of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. While the scientists, as scientists, were reluctant to abandon the rationalist belief that the world was a complex of law-governed processes, their empirical knowledge seemed to prove that man's social behaviour was very largely instinctive rather than intelligent, and suggested that the irrational—intuition and passion—should be given a much larger place in any realistic understanding of the past history and making of the future. On the basis of a defective knowledge of the biological sciences, particularly neo-vitalism, Bergson constructed a philosophy of irrationalism. "It exemplifies admirably the revolt against reason which, beginning with Rousseau, has gradually dominated larger and larger areas in the life and thought of the world."¹¹

While formalised and vulgarised liberalism was declining in Britain, it reasserted itself in France after the short period of the post-revolutionary romantic reaction. Indeed in the middle of the nineteenth century, the whole continent was swept by a wave of vigorous liberalism.

In France, the banner of Liberalism was held high after Michelet and Victor Hugo, by Quinet and Renouvier, Fouillee and others, though more or less cautiously than their vibrant predecessors. While others took a wavering attitude towards the crucial question of the dichotomy of the authority of the State and the freedom of the individual, Renouvier declared that there was no collective being called the State that had its existence apart from the individual citizens or to which they could delegate their will.¹² But Fouillee expounded the eclectic theory that the State was a "contractual organism".¹³

The last of the Mohicans of classical liberalism was Anatole France. Faithful to the tradition of the Revolt of Man and the Enlightenment, all his life he vehemently attacked the Church and its dogmas as antagonistic to science and freedom. He maintained that until the spiritual domination of the Church was broken, modern civilisation could not free man's mind. A bold fighter against dogma and prejudices, he was a firm believer in rationalism and in the liberating role of science, even when the authority of Bergson and the eloquence of Sorel made irrationalism fashionable. The full-blooded Liberalism of Anatole France and other early French Radicals led directly to the rationalist Marxism of Guesde and the socialist Humanism of Jaures.

The reaction to the contradictions and inadequacies of formalised nineteenth century Liberalism was most significantly personified by Sorel. Originally a Liberal of the eighteenth century tradition, he was repelled by the fraud of Parliamentary democracy. The failure of the liberals to harmonise individual freedom with the necessity of political administration and economic organisation of the modern society drove Sorel to anarchism, which logically follows from the consistently utilitarian and pragmatic Liberalism. In that mood, Sorel came under the influence of Bergson's philosophy, to be a fiery prophet of romantic irrationalism. He was a fanatic preacher of violence as the only means to reform society. Though an ardent advocate of the proletarian revolution, he rejected Marx's historical determinism and declared that nature and society were not governed by any law, but by a blind will. For this view and his glorification of violence, the proletarian revolutionary Sorel was held as the philosopher of Fascism. Mussolini declared himself to be a disciple of Sorel. While on his death-bed Sorel himself hailed the Russian Revolution as the realisation of his dream and Lenin as the ideal man. It is highly significant that a common parentage of Fascism and Communism can be traced in one man, who represented more forcefully than others the revolt against reason encouraged by the philosophical reaction at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century.

Early in the nineteenth century, the heritage of the philosophical tradition of liberalism passed on to Germany. The German *Aufklärung* was the last great flash of the light of human freedom kindled by the Renaissance and kept burning ever since by

the devotion of an increasing number of worshippers, at the temple of knowledge, liberty and truth. An appreciable advance was made towards the much needed harmony of reason and romanticism, intelligence and emotion science and philosophy. The tradition of that Golden age of German history was inherited by those followers of Hegel and Feuerbach who called themselves Philosophical Radicals. It promised a bright future: The modern civilisation transcending the limitations of a formalised Liberalism and entering a new stage in man's age-long search for freedom, knowledge and truth.

"Three generations of eminent scholars brought about a flowering of intellectual Liberalism, the main principles of which were independence from authority, objectivity and tolerance. In various ways and fields, the emancipation from blind submission to traditional authority was achieved. A materialistic philosophy based on the findings of science did away with metaphysical speculations. Religion was considered as an anthropological phenomenon instead of supernatural revelation. The Bible critically analysed like any other historical document in the eyes of some did not even prove the existence of Christ. Next to science, history indeed was the signature of the liberal age (in Germany). It taught dispassionate objectivity. But the human element behind it should not be overlooked."¹⁴

A divergent current of thought flowed from Kant. Though he started under the influence of Newtonian natural philosophy and the Enlightenment, the inspiration for his thought came rather from the tradition of the Reformation than of the Renaissance. Therefore, his Liberalism was more akin to the conservative English school than to the Radical French. The first to introduce empiricism in German philosophy, Kant proposed to rescue it from the blind-alley of Hume's agnosticism. He thought that empirical philosophy could have a metaphysics, if the gap between the subjective and the objective could be bridged. The postulation of the gap having first been made by Descartes, Kant's Critique implied a revision of the Cartesian system. The Kantian revolution thus amounted to striking at the roots of modern philosophy and to the inauguration of a neo-medievalism.¹⁵

The subjectivism of Kant's Critical Philosophy, on the one hand, fed the romanticism of Fichte and on the other hand, inspired Schopenhauer's revolt against reason. Both of them, together with

Nietzsche, Bergson and Sorel, not to mention the lesser lights, have been hailed as philosophers of Fascism. Fichte was the prophet of German Nationalism, and in the nineteenth century, nationalism was the strange bed-fellow of Liberalism. Fascism was the bastard of that misalliance, particularly in Italy and Germany. A formalist conception of democracy, which had imperceptibly but quite decisively replaced individualism by collectivism, misled liberal politicians to champion nationalism. Presently, experience proved that notwithstanding its democratic professions while still struggling for power, victorious nationalism invariably favoured a reactionary social and cultural outlook and allied itself with conservative forces.

In Italy, triumphant nationalism was not only influenced by the irrational romanticism of Sorel, but accepted the blatantly chauvinistic and frankly conservative doctrines of the French Royalists. Forgetting the support liberalism had given to nationalism in its days of struggle, a leading nationalist theoretician criticised Liberalism for its lack of philosophical outlook and himself made up for the deficiency. "The highest form of human solidarity is the Nation. The Nation is not merely the sum of individual citizens, but it is a living organism, a mystical body, embracing all past, present and future generations, of which the individual is an ephemeral part, and to which he owes his highest duty."¹⁶

These views were "scientifically" elaborated not only by Pareto, whose theory of social circulation and doctrine of the elite provided a sociological justification of chauvinism and dictatorship; they were endorsed also by the liberal philosopher Gentile, who gave the Fascist political theory a cultural form. As Mussolini's Minister of Education he prescribed that curricula should place emphasis on the life of heroes as symbols of the national spirit. He held that human spirit found expression only in national cultures, and therefore individuals should find their expressions through the nation. A pupil and friend of Croce could not be an apologist of Fascism, if Liberalism had not moved far away from its original philosophical position. The testimony to that philosophical reaction was borne by Gentile himself. "Human being is naturally religious. To think means to contemplate God. As against man, God is everything and includes all spiritual values, including religion. The State which tolerates any other sovereign power commits suicide. Whatever is spiritual is free, but within the great

limit of the powers of the State, which itself is 'spiritual'.¹⁷

Man had to free himself from the divine tutelage before he could take up the struggle for temporal freedom. Philosophically, Liberalism was born of the revolt of man against spiritual slavery, and as such it inspired the rise and growth of modern civilisation until the nineteenth century, when, causes mentioned above, brought about a philosophical reaction which culminated in liberals, like Gentile becoming apologists of Fascism.

Nationalism was the child of the Reformaion, which reinforced religion against the revolt of man by harking back to the democratic and individualist traditions of early Christianity. Wherever it came under the influence of the pseudo-democratic Protestant Christianity, Liberalism turned its back on the tradition of the Renaissance, and became associated with a philosophical reaction which ultimately created the atmosphere of irrationalism conducive to the growth both of Fascism and Communism. It was also under the influence of the Reformation that Liberalism found an ally in nationalism; and the crassest form of the mystic collectivist cult is Fascism or National-Socialism.

Germany is the cradle of the idea of the National State; consequently, idealisation of the concept of the nation came to be a distinctive feature of the German culture; a political concept was raised to the status of a metaphysical abstraction. The prejudice of nation-consciousness, nation being identified with an ethnic group is not nearly so very deep-rooted in any other regional culture of Europe. Yet, nationalism, born there in the sixteenth century, did not succeed in Germany until late in the nineteenth. That was a misfortune which generated a widespread feeling of frustration. The result was the psychological complex of inferiority, characteristically expressed in national cultural chauvinism. The inspiration for the German culture was found in the mythology of the Teutonic tribes who inhabited the primeval forests of Central and Eastern Europe before they were civilised by Christianity in the Sagas of prehistoric heroes. The legendary Siegfried came to be the ideal of German manhood. He represented the "*furorteutonicus*" described by Tacitus who found the old Germanic tribes to be "wild, irritable, cunning, hypocritical and adventurous". Siegfried was miraculously endowed with immense vigour and unmatched power which made him invincible. The miracle of a bath in dragon blood clad him in a cloak of invisibility. In short, he was

the archetype of the superman. Nationalist literature cast all the historical heroes of Germany—from Attila to Bismark—on the model of Siegfried.

On the colourful background of myths and legends woven by the fertile imagination of poets and story-tellers, misnamed as historians, Fichte rose as the philosopher of modern German nationalism. Inasmuch as Liberalism identified itself with nationalism, Fichte was a Liberal. He has been hailed also as the "child of the people", who heralded socialism. Yet, he was the prophet of the Nordic myth of German Fascism. He described the Germans as the race of the purest blood, and, therefore destined to possess "the mystic powers of nature". Thanks to the unique racial purity, the Germans are "the (chosen) people, metaphysically destined, possessed of the moral right to fulfil the destiny by every means of cunning and force. The theoreticians of German Fascism found justification for the cult of brutality, cynicism and amorality in Fichte, who preached a double standard of morality."¹⁹ What is wicked for the individual to do, is a sacred duty of the State. "Between States there is neither law nor right save the law of the strongest."²⁰ For its purpose, the State is entitled to adopt all possible means—and fraud, violation of law, physical violence. The purpose is to enforce the will of the collective ego of the nation, which is bound by no laws. That was the quintessence of Fascism, formulated by a liberal philosopher, when Capitalism was still in its adolescence and the spectre of Communism had not yet appeared even in the imagination of Marx.

The cultural chauvinism and spirit of aggression inherent in Fichte's romantic nationalism were elaborated by a number of writers, historians and University professors, who wielded a powerful influence on the intellectual and emotional outfit of the German youth nearly for two generations before the First World War. During that period of the prosperity of German Capitalism and consolidation of the German Empire, was cultivated the national predisposition to accept the doctrine of Fascism as the expression of the traditional German spirit and the Fascist practice as the means for the accomplishment of Germany's world mission.

Paul de Lagarde and Julius Langbehn in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, developed the mystic element of Fichte's philosophy of nationalism. They initiated the cult of *Innlichkeit* (inwardness), which was supposed to be the foundation of the

moral superiority of the German race. The mystic cult was fanatically preached by Gustav Frenssen, Wilhelm Schaefer, Hans Grimm and others.

De Lagarde was the theoretician of Pan-Germanism. Concretising the famous Bismarckian doctrine, *Drang nach Osten*, he wrote: "The Germanisation of our neighbours in the East would be a worthwhile deed. May Russia be so kind and move some three-hundred miles further East to Central Asia. If she refuses to do so, she will force us to expropriate her, that is, to make war on her. The legend of *Innerlichkeit* as the token of the moral superiority of the Germans, as the mystic sanction for culture chauvinism, was elaborated pseudo-scientifically in the race cult by Houston Chamberlain, an englishman who became a naturalised German. He was a disciple of Alfred Rosenberg, the theoretician of Hitler's National-socialism. Thus, Fascism was neither a class ideology nor economically determined.

The historian Treitzschke, himself a Slav, drew on the stories of the war-likeness of the ancient Teutonic tribes, and also on his own imagination, to provide a cultural foundation for German nationalism "The Teuton, a born conqueror, takes his property wherever he finds it. War is the supreme court of history."²² With such dictums. Treitzschke fired the imagination of the German youth all of whom aspired to be something like Siegfried, the superman. The foundation of Fascism thus was not economic, but emotional, irrationalism cultivated in the atmosphere of a philosophical reaction.

"In the Reichstag of 1930, there were thirteen political parties. From an ideological viewpoint, they can be divided into two opposite groups. It is not the old conflict of conservatism and progress, but one that reaches beyond the political sphere into the depths of *Weltanschauung*, the conflict between rationalism and irrationalism. It is reflected by the type of leaders that appear on the public stage, the intellectual who pleads with the arguments of reason, and the demagogue who appeals to emotional sentiments. The conflict between the rational and irrational forces is the story of political thought in pre-Nazi Germany."²³

Schopenhauer began the revolt against reason, which manifesting itself through art, literature and philosophy during the closing decades of the nineteenth century heralded the advent of Fascism. Fichte was a romanticist, but not altogether irrational. He

did not swim with the current of philosophical reaction which came to Germany through Schopenhauer, a pupil of Kant. Schopenhauer nevertheless came under the romantic influence of the Tieck-Novalis circle. But he soon turned his back on the Renaissance romanticism and found himself at home in the reactionary pessimist school. Eventually, Friedrich Schlegel introduced him to Indian mysticism. He began to hear inner voice and truth was revealed to him. Accordingly, he declared that parts of his main work—*The World as Will and Idea*—were dictated by the Holy Ghost."

The concept of the "thing-in-itself" was the anticlimax of Kant's critical philosophy. It implied a relapse into mystic metaphysics. Hegel, and Fichte also, in a sense, rejected the concept. Schopenhauer did the opposite; it has been said, perhaps maliciously, out of spite for Hegel.²⁴ He interpreted the thing-in-itself as the Will. But it was not as big a break with Kant's rationalism as it might appear. The supremacy of Will is inherent in Kant's ethics. He maintained that the difference between a good and a bad man was a difference in their volitions. He also maintained that the metaphysical moral law was concerned with Will. Making explicit what was thus implicit in Kant's metaphysics, Schopenhauer came to the conclusion that will was the ultimate and only reality, and identified the Will of the individual, who could will, with the Universal Will.²⁵

But substitution of one mystic concept by another notion would hardly be an illuminating interpretation. Schopenhauer defined Will: It is the ultimate, irreducible, primeval principle of the whole being, the impelling force producing the world of phenomena, including life and all its manifestations. Thus the definition tends towards a sort of mystic pantheism. But it turns abruptly to the opposite direction; the Will is a blind urge without any cause, a fundamental, utterly unmotivated impulse. So the romanticism of Schopenhauer's youth was drowned in the fatalism of his later philosophy. That is why he transferred his loyalty from the Greek rationalist Humanism to Hindu mystic pantheism.

Schopenhauer, however, was not a pantheist in the true sense of the term; his Cosmic Will is not like Spinoza's Substance; it is not identical with God. Schopenhauer's Cosmic Will is not Divine Will—to goodness and virtue in man. On the contrary, it is the evil, wickedness, causes of all suffering. Therefore, life is destined

to be full of sorrows which increase with the increase of knowledge. The world is a vast prison-house, out of which there is no escape. Man is condemned to eternal servitude by his own will, which he cannot control because it is the manifestation of the Cosmic Will. So the urge for freedom is an illusion, misleading man ever since the birth of the species; it is a typical case of the proverbial carrot dangling before the donkey. Man has no way out of the vicious circle of the Cosmic Will, because knowledge which is said to give power only galvanises his bondage; and in any case, knowledge cannot help because intellect, the capacity to know is also created by Will." This relation between will and mind, this premise of Schopenhauer that the second is only the tool of the first has about it as much that is humiliating and deplorable, as that is even Comic. It puts in a nutshell the whole tendency and capacity of mankind to delude itself and imagine that it will receive its direction and content from its mind, whereas our philosopher asserts the direct opposite, and relegates the intellect to a position of a mere mouth-piece of the Will: to justify it, to provide it with 'moral' motivations, and in short to rationalise our instincts."²⁶

The philosophical reaction heralded by the Reformation, unwittingly helped by British empiricism and finally ushered in by Rousseau, reached its apotheosis in Schopenhauer. "In one form or another, the doctrine that Will is paramount has been held by many modern philosophers, notably Nietzsche, Bergson, James and Dewey. And in proportion as Will has gone up in the scale, knowledge has gone down. This is the most notable change that has come over the temper of philosophy in our age. It was prepared by Rousseau and Kant, but was first proclaimed in its purity by Schopenhauer."²⁷

Nietzsche called himself a follower of Schopenhauer and consistently developed the doctrine of the omnipotent Will to the cult of brutality and cynicism of the hero. But he was really of a class by himself, and broke away from the tradition of classical German philosophy as well as the general philosophical reaction by denouncing Kant as a "moral fanatic à la Rousseau". Nietzsche felt that the destruction by science of the faith in the dogmas of Christianity was leading to a negation of all values—to what he characterised as "nay saying to life." He held that nineteenth century Naturalism was a mere makeshift—that it could not give a new

meaning to life. "Philosophical systems are wholly true only for their founders; for all later philosophers, they are usually one vast error; for weaker minds, they are blend of truth and error; but in any case, as the highest end, they are errors and are, therefore, to be rejected." Nietzsche marked the close of an epoch, the intellectual, cultural and moral ideals of which turned out to be self-contradictory and impractical, because the philosophy of nature as well as of life underlying them had not been consistently carried to their logical conclusions.

The new philosophy founded by Descartes was a revolt against mediaevalism. Backed up by the humanist spirit of the Renaissance and the advance of scientific knowledge, it was objectively meant to liberate man's mind from the lingering tradition of the religious mode of thought, of the influence of a theological metaphysics and a dogmatic morality with sacerdotal-authoritarian or mystic-transcendental sanction.

The light of the growing knowledge of science blazed the trail for philosophy to follow. But just as in the dawn of civilisation inadequacy of positive knowledge had compelled early naturalist speculations to postulate super-natural agencies, and lay the foundation of religion; similarly, in modern times also, the inability of science to explain fully all the phenomena of nature, particularly the so-called vital and mental ones, kept religious atavism alive to confuse philosophical thought and thus impede man's march towards spiritual liberation. Ultimately, in the nineteenth century, philosophy came to be the field of battle between the belief in reason and irrationalism, scientific naturalism and various forms of camouflaged super-naturalism, secularism and transcendentalism, materialism and spiritualism.—in short, between knowledge and faith. The currents of thought which ran counter to the logical evolution of the new philosophy themselves were equally logical because they represented habits and emotional predispositions cultivated during the centuries of an earlier epoch.

The crisis of philosophical thought expressed itself in a growing contradiction between political and social doctrines deduced from it and their practice. The net result of the experience of the nineteenth century was man's loss of faith in himself. Individualism was eclipsed by collectivism; political liberty, cultural autonomy, intellectual freedom were to be sacrificed for the cult of totalitarianism; democracy was threatened by dictatorship. But at

the same time, science had advanced to acquire knowledge through which a flood of light was thrown not only on the vast expanse of the physical Universe, and in the obscure corners of the living nature but also to reveal the secrets of the being and becoming of man to unravel the mystery of human nature. In that light, intellectual, cultural and moral ideals acquired new meanings. Freedom was no longer to be sought in a distant utopia; knowledge was no longer a delusion, morality a mystic state, nor truth a metaphysical abstraction. Conceived by human mind all those traditional ideals or values were within the reach of human endeavour, progressively reinforced by the creative power derived from increasing knowledge.

But the new Renaissance called for revolt against, the "conventional lies" of the nineteenth century civilisation. Nietzsche personified that revolt. He also personified the conflict which confused the intellectual life and disintegrated the morals of the passing epoch. Not an adept in the art of self-deception, so successfully practised by lesser men, he consciously experienced the nerve-wrecking conflict of emotions and went mad.²⁸

Fascism and Communism both claimed the historical mission of building a new civilisation, one on the ruins, and the other on the basis of the positive achievements of the nineteenth century. Either of them could, therefore, find in Nietzsche support for its doctrine and practice. But the Dionysian role of Nietzsche was predominating; his condemnation of modern civilisation appeared to be so very sweeping that the Fascists monopolised him as their philosopher. But if Nietzsche was against Socialism, he was even more hostile to Nationalism.²⁹ Nietzsche's Superman was the "good European", embodiment of all the intellectual, cultural and moral values of modern civilisation which the Fascists proposed to destroy as decadent and foreign to the German spirit. The Nazis vulgarised the nietzschean idea of "Beyond good and Evil" to justify their negation of morality. But Nietzsche distinguished bad from evil. The idea was a declaration of revolt against the conventional meanings of the terms and the "slave morality" which it sanctioned. While ridiculing the idea of evil, he evidently had Schopenhauer's philosophy in mind. Moreover, it would also be a plausible interpretation of the famous Nietzschean doctrine that good and evil stood for God and the devil, between which two equally powerful imaginary rulers of his destiny, man was reduced

to a position of utter helplessness. The archetype of Nietzsche's Superman was presumably Goethe's Mephistopheles, the cynical philosopher laughing at the hypocrisy of the man who had neither the courage to be bad nor the strength to be good. The doctrine of the eternity of the dual principles of good and evil must have attracted Nietzsche to the religion of the Magis. Since God was the embodiment of both the principles, it logically follows that spiritual freedom lay beyond good and evil.

Nietzsche's philosophy was first formulated when he was still under Wagner's influence, in *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music*. The old theme of the conflict between the Dionysian and the Apollonian tendencies in Greek culture is developed with great artistic skill and a wealth of poetic imagery often reaching wanton extravagance. The Dionysian tendency is older; it represents "primal strength unending, turbulent lust and longing which drive man to conquest, mystic ecstasy and love-death". Shorn of the extravagance of poetic phrase, it is man's urge for freedom, capacity to be conscious of that basic impulse of life, faith in his power to conquer nature, the emotional predisposition to reveal in the realisation of his creative power and to enjoy the beauties of life, even if that meant death. This pederstrian assertion is not altogether free from poetry; but Nietzsche's philosophy cannot be dissociated from poetic twists and turns.

What he meant by the Dionysian tendency in Greek culture, however, is clear when he says that it was represented by the philosophers and artists from Democritus to Epicurus, and that it was overwhelmed when leadership passed on to Socrates, Euripides and Plato, who represent, the Apollonian tendency. Nietzsche described the latter as peace-loving, harmonious, wanting to restrain the elemental impulses of life. By drawing the contrast in high colours and sharp relief, Nietzsche only means to suggest that he prefers naturalism to mystic-metaphysical preoccupations which led to the spiritual slavery of man and "slave-mentality". Dionysian culture gives full rein to man's urge for freedom and creative power; it is humanist in the truest sense of the term. The Apollonian, on the other hand, sets a limit to man's potentialities, subordinates him to mystic-metaphysical restrictions, which eventually incarnate as Gods to rule over man.

The implication of Nietzsche's poetic philosophy, therefore, was that the nineteenth century expressed the conflict between the two

old tendencies, and he was all in favour of the Dionysian, destructive as well as creative humanist—destructive of the obstacles to the unfoldment of man's capacity to be free, to create and enjoy. Logically, he was a rebel against the philosophical reaction which doubted, then denied, man's ability to stand on his own legs, without spiritual, mystic or godly crutches.

Confronted with the fact of the breakdown of the nineteenth century culture, Nietzsche felt that his personal life symbolised a world full of pains. The purpose of his whole philosophy, therefore, was to solve the problem of pain. He found the solution in the famous dictum "*Wille zur Macht*". While Kant's moral order was deduced from the metaphysical concept of Good Will, arbitrarily super-imposed upon a physically determined Universe, Nietzsche believed that a stable system of values could be built only on the supreme fact of human will. He argued, wrongly, that scientific Naturalism implied a fatalistic attitude to life. This "our modern form of philosophical sensibility is simply a continuation of the belief in Divine Dispensation, an unconscious continuation; as it did not depend on us alone how everything is to be. To demand that anything should be different from what it is, is to demand that everything should be different from what it is; such a desire expresses a hostile criticism of the whole."³⁰

On the whole, Nietzsche's life was a Dionysian dance, mitigated by pardonable slips, and it concluded the tragedy of the nineteenth century, denouncing rationalism and ridiculing irrationalism, criticising classicism and castigating romanticism, offering an ethics and cynically rejecting all moral values, condemning Nationalism and mocking at Socialism—all at once.

Nietzsche closed an epoch, and stood at the gates of a new one, which was destined to be dominated by two apparently, antagonistic movements. Both drew inspiration from him; the Fascists hailed him as their philosopher for his glorification of irrationalism and the cult of the hero; the Communists took from him lessons in cynicism, brutality and moral nihilism. And Nietzsche's philosophy was not economically determined.

The aspects of Nietzsche's philosophy which could serve the purpose of Fascism were given a fantastic form by Stefan George and his followers. They declared that the entire European history since the age of Socrates was "the tragedy of the triumph of the intellect". The Apollonian era must now be followed by a new

Dyonisian one, which will dream of a cosmic cataclysm. In human relations, complete subordination and passionate devotion to the superman should replace the farce of democracy and corrupting and devitalising intellectual pretensions. Stefan George sang the ode to the coming leader: "Plough over our bodies, and nobody will ever call you to account." Unknown until the first world war, he sprang into fame as the poet-philosopher of the Nazi movement, and he had drawn inspiration from Nietzsche.

Fascism as well as Communism thus was the concrete outcome of the philosophical reaction which, reinforced by the "crisis of the physical theories", led to the orgy of irrationalism in the beginning of the twentieth century. With their faith in the Marxian determinist view of nature and history, Communists might appear to be rationalists. But the dogmatic assertion of determinism itself was a negation of reason. It amounted to a blind faith. Moreover, irrespective of the nature of that theory, in practice their appeal was exclusively emotional, the object being to promote a blind faith in the mystic power of the masses, and in the infallibility of the revolutionary vanguard of the working class, that is, themselves and their party. The Communists were no less contemptuous of the liberal tradition and democratic practice of the nineteenth century than the Fascists. Both stood for collectivism, totalitarian regimentation and dictatorship. Both were equally cynical about morality; and both preached the cult of leadership. The ideological difference was superficial. The struggle between the two which all but destroyed the civilised world, was exclusively for power to dominate the world.

Nationalism and Socialism, both being collectivist and totalitarian doctrines, were bound to combine in a mortal struggle against the ideals of modern culture and civilisation, namely, philosophical individualism and cosmopolitan Humanism. The fact that Fichte preached both Nationalism and Socialism anticipated their future alliance. Not only did German Nationalism talk of Socialism; subsequently, Communism also allied itself with, and actually degenerated into, Nationalism. National-Socialism and Communist Nationalism are the two sides of the same medal.

NOTES

1. A Social-Democratic theoretician condemns the Bolshevik State for "Stringently curtailing human freedom in the spiritual sphere". Yet,

as a faithful disciple of Marx, he declares that "the individual is only a most transitory incarnation of the life of the species; that persons are accidental, whereas society is continuous and essential". (Karl Renner, *The Institutions of Private Law and Their Social Functions*).

2. *The Intellectual System of the Universe*.

3. "That the moral philosophy of the eighteenth century should be somewhat narrow in scope is the natural consequence of its starting point. It is inductive; it collects facts and then looks for a theory to explain them, and the collection of facts is the chief thing. It has, therefore, little inclination to exhibit the theory of ethics as part of a general philosophy or as an appendix to a theory of knowledge. Even the question on which it came most nearly into contact with the theory of knowledge, the question whether moral perceptions originate in sense or in reason, was commonly treated with reference to little beyond its strictly ethical issues. The horizon of Cudworth and Price is indeed wider; but Cudworth belonged to the seventeenth century. Hume's moral theory is very psychological and very little metaphysical... In Locke's *Essay*, moral theory comes in at intervals in order to round off the discussion, and though it certainly contains a great deal which is of great importance for the metaphysics of morals, it is distinctly episodic in character. Bishop Berkeley was a most metaphysical person... But the ethical portions of his writings might, to all appearances, have been written by Paley... And Butler, the most typical of British moralists, will have nothing whatever to do with the metaphysics of his subject—whether the moral faculty be regarded as a sentiment of the understanding or 'a perception of the heart or both', is for him a matter of small importance... That morals have a peculiar interest for the lawyer, politician and the divine, needs no saying. For the rest, ethics had been in the hands of theologians, though in dealing with ethics had been in the hands of theologians, though in dealing with ethics, the spiritual elements of theology, even in its most spiritual periods, had a way of evaporating, leaving little more than a legal code, tempered with reminiscences of Aristotle, still the theological point of view dominated everything except the recalcitrant law of nature." (L. A. Selby-Biggy, *The British Moralists*).
4. Hume's empiricism, as Reid points out, constructs our whole knowledge out of representative ideas. The empirical factor is so emphasised that we lose all grasp of the real world.
5. In 1808, Du Bois-Reymond delivered in a meeting of the German Scientific and Medical Association a lecture "*On the Limits of the Knowledge of Nature*." It became famous because its essence was summarised as "*Ignorabimus*."
6. "The growth of unreason throughout the nineteenth century and what has passed of the twentieth, is a natural sequel to Hume's destruction of empiricism." (Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*).

7. Dugald Stewart, *Active and Moral Powers*.
8. In the early nineteenth century, "English philosophy hardly existed." (Leslie Stephen, *The English Utilitarians*).
9. Leslie Stephen, *The English Utilitarians*.
10. "The institutions represented the ultimate ground taken, specially in religious and ethical questions, by men who wished to be at once liberal philosophers and yet to avoid revolutionary extremes." (Ibid).
11. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*.
12. Charles Renouvier, *Philosophie Analytique de, Histoire*.
13. Alfred Fouillee, *La Science Sociale Contemporaine*.
14. Friedrich Karl Sell, "German Pre-Nazi Political Thought," in *Twentieth Century Political Thought*, published by the Philosophical Library, New York.
15. Reid was a more thorough-going critic of Hume than Kant. His works gave the negative proof of the Kantian truth (Schopenhauer) and substituted idea by intuition, which was defined as a mysterious and inexplicable connection between mind and matter. "We are inspired with the sensations, as we are inspired with the corresponding perceptions, by means unknown" (Reid).
16. Enrico Corradini, *Discorsi Politici*.
17. Giovanni Gentile, *Fascism and Culture*.
18. Fichte, *Speeches to the German Nation*.
19. "We see the old German Nationalism after its grand flaming up in the Wars of Liberation, after its deepest foundation by Fichte, after its explosive rise through Stein and Arndt, the unqualified greatness of these men who in 1813 again led Germany from the abyss to the heights": (Alfred Rosenberg, *Mythus*).
20. Fichte, *Speeches to the German Nation*.
21. Paul de Lagarde, *Schriften fuer Deutschland*.
22. Heinrich von Treitzschke, *History of Germany*.
23. Friedrich Karl Sell, "The German Pre-Nazi Political Thought," in *Twentieth Century Political Thought*, published by the Philosophical Library, New York.
24. It is a fact that Schopenhauer was very jealous of Hegel for the latter's great popularity. Trying to outshine his more brilliant rival, Schopenhauer used to time his classes in the Berlin University simultaneously with Hegel's. The result was that he had to lecture to empty benches, while Hegel's lectures were delivered to an ever growing number of students. It has been maintained by biographers that bitter experience was the cause of Schopenhauer's pessimism. Whatever might have been the emotional reaction, he certainly seized upon and developed the Kantian concept which was so severely criticised by Hegel.

25. "What is real is one vast will, appearing in the whole course of nature, animate and inanimate alike." (Bertand Russell).
26. Thomas Mann, *The Living Thoughts of Schopenhauer*.
27. Bertand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*.
28. The opinion expressed in a new study of Nietzsche's life is: "Nietzsche was a weak man, delicate, sensitive, and morbidly self-conscious. In revenge for this, he extolled the strong, just as it was in revenge for his incapacity to take vigorous physical pleasure in life that he extolled Dionysiac frenzies." (H. A. Reyburn, *Nietzsche: The Story of a Human Philosopher*).
29. Nietzsche characterised "Nationalism as the neurosis from which Europe suffers, by which the Germans, with their wars of independence, robbed Europe itself of its meaning and intelligence; they have led it into a blind-alley". (*Ecce Homo*).
30. *Wille zur Macht*.

Chapter XXII

THE CRISIS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The conditions of the contemporary world present a dismal picture of decay, degradation and demoralisation. The threatening perspective appears to be either of a ruinous war or a slow breakdown of modern civilisation. While peace is obviously the crying need of a distracted and tormented world, on all sides, there is talk of war and frantic preparation for it. No sensible person wants another war; yet, it seems to be inevitable, like fate. Man seems to have lost all faith in himself; consequently, the hopelessness about the future of the race has reached the limit. It is indeed a paradoxical situation. Man's creative faculties have unfolded themselves in our time to a higher degree than ever before; he knows much more; his ability to do things is, therefore, correspondingly greater. Nevertheless, something seems to be lacking. Human creativeness is inhibited; the eternal urge to go forward, to break down intellectual and spiritual barriers, seems to have lost its force.

Plausible political theories and doctrines of social justice are still preached. They all talk of democracy, freedom and equality. But the realities of the contemporary world contradict the promising theoretical pictures presented in the nineteenth century. It is not because the theories were false or deliberately deceptive, but because man has failed to take the fullest advantage of the knowledge acquired in modern times, so as to apply it to the solution of the problems of actual life. During the last half a century, the failure became more and more remarkable, until the world reached its present state of helplessness and despair. Human ingenuity seems to have been completely exhausted. Promising political and social doctrines—liberal democratic, Marxist—have all been practised, and all equally found wanting. If they were capable of solving the problems of modern life, the world should not be plunged in the present impasse. Nor is it true that they were not practised

honestly by their respective protagonists. To hold on to discredited faiths by doubting the sincerity of the profession of others is woeful self-deception.

The experience of contemporary history has exposed the fallacies of the cherished social, political and economic ideas and ideals, classical as well as revolutionary. The world is full of possibilities, material and mental. To build a better and freer society is a practical possibility. Yet, things go from bad to worse; helplessness and hopelessness grow to corrode the springs of human action and corrupt the ideals of civilised life. Failure and disappointment are bound to follow from attempts to solve the problems of our time with the ideas of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The mental make-up and moral tone of the civilised man have not been brought up to the level of material progress. That is the root cause of the crisis of our time.

The civilised world has been confronted with new problems for a whole period of history, during which time they seem to have baffled human intelligence; they have defied solution on the basis of old ideas and theories. History has reached one of the recurring periods when man is compelled to take stock of things, look back on his past in the light of experience, and examine traditional ideas and time-honoured ideals critically, in order to find out what is lacking in him so as to bring him to a state of helplessness, frustration and despair. Appreciation of the significance of the knowledge acquired in the intervening period enables man to reject cherished notions, and reevaluate old values, evolve new ideas and visualise new ideals, to inspire action and guide his steps towards the future.¹

The decay and possible breakdown of old social institutions and political systems, and the consequent pragmatic discredit of their theoretical sanctions have precipitated a crisis. The errors, inadequacies and outright failure (in the case of some) of ideologies, either of reform or of revolution, have created the atmosphere of frustration, despair, disgust and disillusionment. Civilised mankind is confronted with the choice between a modern barbarism promising material well-being and security in a socially regimented and spiritually enslaved life, or a relapse into mediaeval obscurantism in search of an illusory safety in the backwaters of faith. This conflict of ideologies underlies the process of political polarisation which may any day plunge the world headlong into a titanic

clash of arms. A growing number of tormented souls throughout the civilised world are eagerly looking out for a possible escape from the dreadful dilemma. Never in history has man's ingenuity been put to a greater test. He will have the courage to decline the security of slavery, in one form or another, only by regaining faith in himself.

A searching analysis of the problems confronting the modern world leads to the conclusion that the crisis of our time calls for a complete reorientation of social philosophy and political theories, so as to recognise the supreme importance of moral values in public life. Therefore, one hears appeals to morality even from the most unexpected quarters. Politicians engaged in the unscrupulous scramble for power sanctimoniously talk of moral obligations. Yet, the situation deteriorates. The law of the jungle, scramble for political power, lust for economic loot, reign supreme. Any country which may plead not guilty to the charge only lays itself open to the graver charge of telling the untruth.

Nevertheless, the mere fact that the absence of moral scruples in public life is generally deplored, that lip loyalty is pledged to moral values, is significant. If in practice politicians cannot be true to their profession, that is not necessarily a proof of dishonesty. They are caught in a vicious circle. Engaged in a game, one must play it according to the rules. The fault of moralising politicians is the failure to realise that, so long as power remains the object of political practice, it cannot be handicapped by irrelevant scruples, it must be guided by the dictum that the end justifies the means. Caught in the whirl-pool, even the best of men are bound to be pulled down to the lowest depth, which may appear as the pinnacle of power.

The disconcerting experience of the contemporary world compels thoughtful people to re-examine the fundamental principles of social philosophies from which different political theories of the Right and of the Left, conservative and liberal, reactionary and revolutionary—are alike deduced. The experience is that in practice there is little difference, because capture of power, irrespective of the diversity of means advocated for the purpose, is the common postulate of all political theories. Morality in public life, therefore, presupposes a political theory which does not make capture of power the precondition for any necessary social change; and a new political theory must be deduced from a social philos-

ophy which restores man in the place of primacy and sovereignty.

Morality being the dictate of conscience, it can be practised only by individuals. Without moral men there can be no moral society. Until now, all the architects and engineers of a new society have reversed the order. They all postulated an ideal order as the condition for the free growth of human personalities. The Liberals believed that the ideal of a good life could be attained by good laws. As against their "reformism", Socialists and later on Communists maintained that economic reconstruction on the basis of common ownership was the condition for human development. The result has been eclipse of the individual by collectivities; totalitarianism and dictatorship in political practice have been the corollary to collectivist social philosophies.

It is easy enough to place the individual in the centre of a social philosophy. As a matter of fact, individualism was the cardinal principle of liberal social philosophy and political theory; and Liberalism was the source of inspiration for the magnificent achievements of modern civilisation. But in practice, the principle of individualism was reduced to an abstract doctrine, the sovereign individual to a legal fiction. The decay of Liberalism encouraged the rise of various collectivist doctrines which denied the possibility of individual freedom, ridiculed the idea as an empty abstraction, and proclaimed that, in order to be free, the individual must merge himself in the mass; in other words, find freedom in self-annihilation. If Liberalism had made a legal fiction of the sovereign individual, the Socialist as well as the Communist conception of freedom is a fraud.

The cause of the decline of the liberal social philosophy was the ambiguity about the sanction of morality. It started with the excellent principle that the individual was a moral entity and as such sovereign. That is an ancient belief; in Europe, Christianity popularised it: Man is a moral entity because he possesses the soul which is a spark of the Divine light of the universal moral order. In the beginning, that was an elevating idea; inspired by it, European humanity threw off the thralldom of the patriarchal and communal organisations of the mediaeval, social order. The religious faith in man's moral essence limits his sovereignty; indeed, it is a negation of the liberating concept. In the last analysis, it implies that man as man cannot be moral; to be so, he must feel himself subordinated to a super-human power. With this paralysing sense

of spiritual subservience, man can never be really free. Man's struggle against the doctrine of the necessity of his eternal spiritual subordination was the outstanding feature of the earlier stages of modern civilisation. Liberalism was born out of that struggle, which reached the highwater mark in the eighteenth century. The Enlightenment was its afflorescence.

The shock of the French Revolution, however, frightened Liberalism out of its wits. Natural religion was opposed to naturalism, and the sanction for social and individual morality was traced to a transcendental moral order.² As against the transcendentalism of the early nineteenth century moral philosophy, liberal social reformers and political theorists advanced the utility principle of morality. If in the former, moral values were metaphysical concepts beyond the test of human experience, the latter deprived them of any objective standard, and that amounted to a negation of morality. Between the two, the civilised world was thrown into a moral confusion.

At the same time, the practice of Parliamentary democracy and *laissez faire* economics reduced the individual to a helpless position. The cumulative effect of moral confusion and social atomisation destroyed man's faith in himself. The collectivist ridicule of the idea of individual freedom corresponded with the experience of the bulk of the community. Having lost faith in himself, the individual welcomed the hope offered by collectivist social philosophy, of finding security in the imaginary power of the masses. The reality of the human factor disappeared from politics. To sway the masses by appealing to base instincts and evil passions, came to be the essence of political practice.

It is clear that moral philosophy itself must be placed on a sound basis before it can have a wholesome influence on social doctrines and political practice. The crucial question, therefore, is: What is the foundation of ethics? Can man be moral by himself? Until now, the prevailing opinion has been that man can behave morally only under compulsion, either super-natural or social. This view about the source of morality nullified the time-honoured belief that man is a moral entity. That belief must be resurrected, and freed from its original limitations, if a really revolutionary social philosophy is to prescribe a rational political theory and a moral political practice.

A great advance in this direction was made during the earlier

centuries of the history of modern civilisation, when its pioneers adumbrated certain secular postulates about the nature of man and his place in nature. Their bold speculative thought, progressively reinforced by the expanding knowledge of nature, culminated in the scientific naturalism of the eighteenth century. The approach was humanist, which discarded the dogma of special creation and traced the origin of man in physical nature. Growing out of the background of a law-governed Universe, man must be a rational being; as such he established the original society to serve the purpose of his continued struggle for existence. The revolutionary discoveries of biology in the nineteenth century bore out the speculative postulates and rational hypotheses of the earlier thinkers. But just at that time, the ambiguities and inadequacies of Liberalism set the civilised world adrift towards the present moral confusion.

The confusion was more confounded at the turning of the century, when new discoveries of the physical sciences seemed to render untenable the classical concepts of substance and causality, which were the corner-stones of scientific naturalism. A neo-mysticism, claiming the authority of science, challenged the 'pretentious' philosophy of humanist naturalism. Not only the objective validity, but also even the reality of human knowledge, was disputed. An exaggerated emphasis on epistemology confused cosmological and ontological thought. An intellectual crisis aggravated the moral crisis.

Before long, psychology preached irrationalism on the authority of the natural sciences; in the garb of the vague concept of intuition; mysticism and transcendentalism returned to ethics. Man is irrational; he is instinctively moved by the blind urge of dark forces; therefore, the sanction of morality, either in private or public life, is the penal code and the police, or the priest. Except under the surveillance of these temporal and 'spiritual' custodians of law and order, the law of the jungle would reign. The irony of our time is that the dreaded law of the jungle came to reign supreme, nonetheless.

The only way out of this vicious circle is indicated by a moral philosophy which finds the sanction of its values in the rationality of the human being. But what is the sanction of the rationality of man? What is Reason? Is it again a metaphysical category or a biological property? In the former case, the problem of the

sanction of morality is not solved by tracing it to rationality. That is only referring one problem to another. As an expression of reason in nature, rationality can be regarded as a biological function, and physical determinism as reason in nature. The classical concepts of natural law and moral order are hypothetical without any objective content. When objective truths are put into them, they become expressions of reason in nature.

The sovereignty of man, which must be the foundation of any revolutionary social philosophy, can be deduced only from the fact that man is a moral entity. It has been a time-honoured belief which could not be sustained in practice; now the belief must be replaced by the knowledge of the fact that man is moral because he is rational. The Universe is a moral order governed by laws inherent in itself. Man grows out of that background.

A secular rationalist system of ethics can be logically deduced from the mechanistic cosmology of the materialist philosophy, and a moral philosophy which can do without a metaphysical and super-sensual sanction is the crying need of our time. If the materialist philosophy is expected to yield an ethics such as will restore man's confidence in himself, it must be able to meet the challenge to its cosmology. It cannot stand if its very foundation is blasted. Mechanistic cosmology is the foundation of Materialism.

The challenge to Materialism as a cosmology is half a century old. It was delivered by the physicists who, at the turn of the century, discovered that the atom was not the ultimate unit of matter, and on that evidence hastily proclaimed the "dematerialisation" of matter. People began to doubt the relevance or correctness of nineteenth century natural philosophy. Physics having revealed that the sub-stratum of the world was not composed of the "hard lumps of reality", philosophers imagined that the imposing structure of scientific naturalism was crumbling. That was the beginning of the crisis of our time. It was a new flare-up in the age-long struggle between religion and science, between the religious mode of thought and the scientific mode of thought, between faith and reason, between mystic agnosticism and the empirically established belief in man's capacity to know. Being most probably the last lap of the life-and-death struggle, it has lasted long, and has placed civilised humanity in a dilemma.

The scientific mode of thought, having driven religion from pillar to post, over a period of several centuries, is meeting the

final assault of the vanquished adversary. The sophisticated philosophies waging war against Materialism with "scientific" weapons are all in the last analysis rationalised religion. Denying the possibility of man ever knowing anything, they preach a neo-mysticism and revive the teleological view of life, which is the expression of man's loss of faith in himself. That is the central feature of the crisis of our time. To come out of it, mankind must have a philosophy which places man in the centre of the Universe, as the maker of his destiny, and celebrate the final triumph of science over religion.

They speak of a cultural crisis; if there is such a crisis, it is experienced only by the sophisticated intellectuals. In reality, it is an intellectual crisis,—a crisis of their intelligence. Otherwise, how can we explain the strange phenomenon of modern man, possessed of an evergrowing scientific knowledge, godless men in search of soul, eager to enthrone a mathematical god in the place vacated by the old-fashioned deity? The scholastics of our time may succeed in promoting a religious revival under the banner of the pseudo-scientific cults of empiricism, positivism, realism, so on and so forth. A self-contained philosophy, beginning with a mechanistic cosmology and ending with a secular evolutionary ethics, is the only guarantee against the danger:—a philosophy which will give an integrated picture of human existence and explain human existence, including desire, emotion, instincts, intuition, will, reason, without going outside the physical world, which is at least theoretically accessible to human comprehension.

In order to avoid the quicksand of transcendentalism, and the pitfalls of relativity, ethics must be integrated in a general philosophy. No useful purpose will be served by building yet another castle in the air, which will not stand the test of the next storm. A humanist ethics, based upon a naturalist rationalism, can be built only on the rockbottom of a mechanistic cosmology and a physical-realist ontology. The next step is to find the connecting link between the world of dead matter and living nature. In the light of the discovery that life originates in course of the mechanistic process of nature, human rationality can be deduced from the background of the law-governed Universe. The imaginary gulf between physics and psychology is thus bridged and the most baffling problem of philosophy, the epistemological problem, is solved. Truth ceases to be a metaphysical concept; it stands out

as the content of positive knowledge. In the light of the basic nature of truth, the nature of other values is more clearly visible, and they can be rationally arranged in a proper hierarchy. Having thus obtained moral values in the world in which man has his being and becoming, we shall be able to harmonise them with a social philosophy which indicates the humanist approach to the economic and political problems confronting the contemporary world.

Everything new grows out of the old. We must take advantage of the entire store of human knowledge and draw upon the entire history of thought. The new philosophy, the need for which we are feeling, can be deduced from the entire current of human thought, which has flown ever since the dawn of civilisation. The crisis of our time is the result of an inability to appreciate that great human heritage. There are abiding as well as temporary values. We have to find out the permanent values created in the course of human evolution. The elements of stability, of unity, of uniformity—ideas pursued ever since the appearance of *homo sapiens*, should be the foundation of a new social philosophy. A philosophy thus founded will have no difficulty in solving the complicated problems which have been baffling conventional philosophers. The solution, however, will not be theoretical; it will come from action inspired by the new philosophy.

Ever since the ancient thinkers abandoned physical enquiry for metaphysical speculation, philosophy was vitiated by the fallacy of dualism. All the religious philosophers of the Middle-Ages were frank dualists. The rationalist rebels against theology—Descartes, Leibniz, Kant—also could not get out of the vicious circle of dualism. In the context of a dualist philosophy, the only logically consistent ideology, which can offer security to man, is religion, and the religious man must always bow before the will of God or the "Moral Law" of the teleological order. Morality is equated with absence of freedom.

The ultra-empiricists of our time also are essentially religious men. They declare that everything beyond the reach of direct experience is metaphysical. From that apparently scientific premise, they deduce a neo-mysticism which goes to the extent of denying man's capacity to know anything outside his own body. The world is veiled in an impenetrable mystery, and in every dark corner a god can be easily imagined. The neo-mysticism of the ultra-modern empiricists installs God on the throne of man's ignorance.

That is how the crisis affects the life of civilised mankind as a whole. Intellectual and institutional equipment cannot cope with the requirements of the time. It is not a choice between two authoritarianisms. There must be a third alternative. The prophets of a revival of the teleological view of life as the only way to bring man back to his moral moorings preach spiritual authoritarianism as against the temporal brand. The remedy may be more dangerous than the disease.

Sorokin, Maritain and Berdyaev are the most outstanding advocates of this doubtful cure. All of them claim to approach the problems of modern life from the rationalist and scientific point of view. Yet, the doctrine that the root of the crisis is man's loss of faith is common to all. The common theme is:—Man as man is of no importance in the scheme of life and history; faith in something mystic is the only mooring of life. Leave that mooring, and man must drift aimlessly and helplessly on the stormy sea of life. That is how the condition of the contemporary world is described and explained.

Sorokin's theory of culture-cycles is dogmatic. Why should human history be cast in an *a priori* conceived pattern? Is there any reason to assume predetermined culture-cycles? The belief in a First Cause or Prime Mover obviously lurks behind Sorokin's "rationalistic and scientific theory". The religious essence of the theory is also evident in its very structure. Idealist culture is the highest culture, and there is no ambiguity in Sorokin's conception of idealist and ideational cultures. Both are spiritualists, while sensate culture is materialist. Materialism may be held up as the devil of the drama; but determinism cannot be easily disposed of, because, the teleological view is also deterministic. The movement of human history in the vicious circle of recurring culture-cycles is a determined process. Indeed, it is predetermined. Because, the determining factor is not inherent in the process; it is a *deus ex machina*. Sorokin is frankly an advocate of religious revivalism; he pleads for the restoration of faith.

Maritain and Berdyaev do not say anything essentially different. The substance of their doctrine also is that man wanders away from the moorings of faith, experiences fear and insecurity, and comes back to the safety of the harbour of faith. The common cry of all is: Back to the religious mode of thought. The modern religious philosophy is differentiated from orthodox revivalism by

a discriminating association with rationalism and scientific knowledge. But yet another attempt to reconcile faith with reason, mysticism with Humanism, mediaevalism with modernism, is bound to be futile.

A cry for a return to rationality and some sort of moral moorings rises out of the crisis of our time. But scepticism about the objective validity of scientific knowledge, the ultramodern hyper-intellectual craze to point out admitted flaws as justifications for challenging the reliability of scientific knowledge, makes of it a cry in the wilderness. The result is an all-round despair and spiritual destitution. If one starts from doubt about the objective validity of scientific knowledge, about the possibility of a non-transcendental metaphysics, there is no escape from the moral crisis which has overtaken the civilised world. The only alternative is to search for the criterion of truth and sanction for morality in the super-sensual world of delusions or in the dreamland of the religious experience of godless men.

Sensitive minds are tormented by the imaginary uncertainties of value judgements; the pathological and unbalanced souls, who are overwhelmed by the crisis, talk of anguish as the *leitmotif* of a whole philosophy of life. The bewildered bulk of modern mankind perceive only two ways out of the moral chaos and intellectual confusion: the lure of protection offered by a totalitarian State and the certainty of a regimented economic, social and cultural existence; the other way is the stampede of modern men in search of God.

In neither way will civilised mankind overcome the crisis. Both mean defeat. One means relapse into barbarism; civilised indeed, but barbarism nonetheless—a social order and cultural atmosphere which is bound to breed Koestler's "twentieth century Neanderthals." The other implies lowering of the standard of the revolt of man raised four hundred years ago, a standard under which during a relatively short period of time mankind achieved the greatest advance in the age-long quest for freedom and search for truth. It means return to spiritual slavery, surrendering the right of freedom; a shameful admission that even civilised man of the twentieth century cannot be good except under the feeling of compulsion, cannot be truthful, moral and virtuous under the guidance of his own conscience, which is not a mystic inner voice nor a divine presentiment, but a biological heritage, an emergent

novelty of the process of evolution. In short, the second way out of the wilderness of the crisis of our time is return to mediaevalism in search of certainty and security in faith.

Is there no other way? Is modern civilisation then doomed? Has the human species exhausted all its potentialities, human creativeness reached its limit? Is freedom an empty concept? Has the age-long quest for freedom been a wild-goose chase? Must we come to the conclusion that knowledge is impossible, to seek solace in the bliss of ignorance?

The choice for civilised mankind is not limited to the two alternatives indicated above. There is a way out of the crisis, a way which opens up a new perspective, a new horizon. The cry for a return to rationality and moral behaviour in public life can be satisfied only with a reinforcement of the conviction that growing out of the background of a law-governed Universe, man is essentially rational; that the concept of a law-governed Universe is not a mere projection of the metaphysical Pure Reason; that instincts and intuitions are not elementary indefinables, categories not to be further analysed, but are rational behaviour of organisms.

The corollary to the conviction is that a secular morality is possible, and that the sanction for moral behaviour, the criterion for value judgment, is furnished by the innate rationality of the human being. But the human being does not appear as a finished product. Human existence consists in an endless process of unfolding of the potentialities which are of biological heritage.

It may sound like dogmatism to those who want to shirk the responsibility of having a conviction. Because, if one has a conviction, he must act accordingly. Those who believe in human creativeness, who do not want to theorise in a social vacuum, who are anxious to clarify ideas with the purpose of having a firm conviction as the incentive for action, cannot be frightened by the bogey of dogmatism. If thinking is purposeful, if intellectual pursuit is not a mere pastime of the solipsist elite, all difficulties disappear the robust spirit of enquiry broadens our intellectual horizon, and widens the scope of human knowledge.

Clear ideas and firm convictions are necessary for fruitful action; conversely, experience gained in action contributes to the clarification of ideas and reinforcement of conviction. Purely intellectual preoccupation, whether of the philosopher in his study, or of the scientist in his laboratory, or of the academician in the class-

room, without any reference to the various coordinates and correlates of life as a whole, tend rather to magnify difficulties and mystify issues than contribute to the solution even of the theoretical problems. Abstract thought and logical thinking are indispensable for keeping life on an even keel. But purposiveness is of decisive importance. Without it, abstract thought and logical thinking may degenerate into intellectual irresponsibility.

Professorial scepticism of the ultra-modern intellectual is not to be equated with the scientific spirit of enquiry. In order to avoid dogmatism, one need not fight shy of any conviction. Human knowledge will be always defective, because always there will be more to know. But that does not necessarily lead to epistemological nihilism, which, subconsciously perhaps, represents an atavistic cultural tendency; it implies neo-mysticism or transcendental metaphysics, if not a religious revivalism, of course with the sanction of science.

The critics of the physical-realist (if the old term "materialist" is really objectionable) approach to the problems of rationality and moral behaviour maintain that Materialism, as a cosmology or as a metaphysics, or again as a philosophy of life, has no sanction in modern science. Consequently, a secular ethics is not possible; no criterion of value judgment can be rationally suggested or admitted.

The logical implication of the objection to an attempt to build a moral and social philosophy on the basis of rationalism is a negation of the possibility of a non-transcendental philosophy. The ultra-modern academic intellectuals scornfully reject Materialism as old-fashioned. They vehemently protest, if their critical and sceptic attitude is described as idealistic. They benevolently smile at the simple proposition that one must either be a Materialist (Physical-Realist) or an Idealist. They refuse to face the fact that, as a negation of Materialism, idealist philosophy is logically associated with a mystic metaphysics of super-naturalism. They prefer to take up an intermediate position, and offer the bewildered world a variety of sophisticated systems of newfangled philosophies, such as Critical Realism, New Realism, Logical Positivism, so on and so forth. The essence of all these systems is a mystic notion of reality. Neither ideas nor matter are real. Nor again is reality a synthesis or combination of the two fundamental categories. What is it, then? Instead of a straightforward answer to a simple com-

nonsense question, the ultra-modern scientific scholasticism takes shelter in sophistry.

The ultimate reality of life must be either man or a non-ego, something other than man himself and beyond his comprehension. The mystic incomprehensible something may be placed outside, to be worshipped as God or contemplated as the Cosmic Principle or Universal Harmony or Moral Order or Metaphysical Unity. In that case, we have an essentially teleological view of the world, which cannot admit of freedom, either as choice or as man's creativeness. Alternatively, the mystic incomprehensible something, which belongs to the world neither of matter nor of ideas, is placed inside man, conceived as intuition. In that case, we have an out-and-out mysticism. This philosophy of ultra-modern hyper-intellectualism, subjected to criticism, turns out to be just the antithesis of what it pretends to be. Placing intuition above intelligence, it glorifies irrationalism. With this philosophy, man may be a robot and yet appear like Prometheus Unbound. But he forfeits his humanness. The robot is not a creator; he is an instrument of creation by some other agency.

Intuitionism, that is to say, *unscientific*, irrationalism of Bergson, for example, laid the philosophical foundation of Fascism. The Fascists also appeal to biology and anthropology for a scientific sanction of their contempt for human personality and individual freedom, of their glorification of war, of their cult of racial jingoism.

The latest scientific knowledge undoubtedly calls for the rejection of certain hypotheses and postulates of eighteenth and nineteenth century science. The materialist philosophy also must be accordingly revised and elaborated as Physical Realism. Its fundamental principles, however, have not been invalidated by the present greater and more accurate knowledge of science. It is not a closed system of thought. It is logical coordination and integration of empirical knowledge into an all embracing explanation of existence. Therefore, it requires continuous readjustment, amplification, enrichment and precision.

The greatest defect of classical Materialism was that its cosmology did not seem to have any connection with ethics. It further appeared that a materialist historiography could do without a moral philosophy. Now that defect can be removed by building a bridge over the imaginary gulf between physics and psychology. The Cartesian psycho-physical parallelism is no longer valid. By trac-

ing the roots of rationality through the entire process of biological evolution, to reason in nature, human rationality can be regarded as an expression of physical determinism, of the harmony of the Universe. A mechanistic cosmology and a rationalist ethics can thus be integrated in a general philosophy.

The rejection of Materialism, restated as Physical Realism, to harmonise with the latest scientific knowledge, precludes admission of the possibility of a non-metaphysical rationalism, and consequently also of the possibility of a non-transcendental moral philosophy. If reason is conceived as a metaphysical category, rationalism can hardly be distinguished from mysticism; the distinction between rationalism and irrationalism loses all meaning. Associated with metaphysical rationalism, which is only another name for intuitionism, ethics must rely on transcendental sanctions: Only godliness can be goodness, and truth is only revealed to the seer. The world of reason and morality being the world of gods and saints, the mortal man who believes in himself and wants to be the architect of his own destiny cannot have any place there. Only as a Materialist, man as man can believe in himself, and have the conviction and confidence to act as the architect of human destiny, including his own.

Modern political theories, originally formulated in the seventeenth century, all started from the individual. The problem was regarding the origin of society: How was civil society founded? The creation of modern political institutions was to be guided by the knowledge of the origin of civil society. In the last analysis, the problem was about the nature of man. The origin of society was explained variously by the different thinkers who applied themselves to the problem. They all assumed implicitly that man was a rational animal. The doctrine of original contract, expounded ever since the sixteenth century, ultimately became the Bible of Democracy. But philosophically, it was interpreted differently. Rousseau's interpretation differed from that of Locke. Liberalism based on Locke's doctrine retained the humanist principle of the sovereignty of the individual. Rousseau was the prophet of totalitarianism, which was ushered in by the doctrine of the General Will. A metaphysical concept of sovereignty replaced the mediæval doctrine of Divine Right. If Kings ruled by Divine Right, Rousseau's democracy also rested on a metaphysical sanction. Subsequently, man himself was completely forgotten, and more

and more emphasis was laid on institutions. It was completely forgotten that, from the time primitive society was formed, all institutions had been created by man as so many instruments to serve the purpose of his being and becoming. Ultimately, it came to be believed that the creation was of greater importance than the creator, to the extent that it was entitled to claim the creator for its first victim. That has been the curse of modern political philosophy, and the breeding ground of the present social crisis.

Modern democracy was, indeed, an improvement on mediaevalism. But its individual units eventually became constitutional fictions; it eclipsed the man of flesh and blood, endowed with intelligence, will and emotion. In modern Liberalism, the individual became the economic man. That degeneration of the humanist tradition of modern democracy culminated in the philosophical Radicalism of the nineteenth century, which still held individual freedom as an article of faith. But in the context of the capitalist society, the economic man could exist either as a slave or as a slaveowner. That debasement of the individual discredited the liberal democratic doctrine of individual freedom and gave rise to Marxist collectivism, which simply recognised the fact of the total eclipse of man by institutions and argued with a measure of plausibility that reconstruction of society frankly as a totalitarian institution would restore human freedom. Ultimately, democracy was destroyed in a fierce clash of totalitarian dictatorships; and civilised mankind was overtaken by the crisis of our time, perhaps the greatest of all in history, being not only political, but also moral and spiritual—a total crisis affecting the whole of human existence.

The modern world appears to be moving towards a position like that of the Roman Empire in decay and on the eve of its downfall. Gloomy prophets are prophesying the end of civilisation. It does seem to be a hopeless situation. The eclipse of the humanist tradition is the cause of this degeneration and decay. Modern civilisation stood at the head of the declining plane of decay, the moment it broke away from the tradition of Humanism, subordinated man to institutions, set up the cult of worshipping imaginary collective egos with the offering of the reality of human intelligence and human reason, celebrated the nation as something bigger than the sum total of the human beings composing it. An abstract conception of society was considered to be something greater than the concrete correlation of individuals. As a result of

these wrong notions, there developed various kinds of political doctrines, which not only went against the tradition of Humanism, but also actually set up collectivist philosophies denying any value to the individual. Modern civilisation is threatened with destruction because of the betrayal of its source of inspiration.

Ever since the original ancestors of man came down from their arboreal abode, and, instead of growing longer and longer limbs in the struggle for existence, learned to break branches to pluck fruits from the trees for nourishment, man has been creating his world. Yet, with the experience of this agelong creative effort, man has lost faith in himself. A greater tragedy has not been written in any language. The solution of the crisis of our time, therefore, lies in the revival of man's faith in himself, in a humanist revival.

The crisis of our time is all-pervading, though it is not felt by the people at large as acutely as by the more sensitive and more alert few. Indeed, the victims of the crisis are not at all conscious of it. That makes it all the more difficult of solution. Therefore, to create a widespread consciousness of the crisis is the first thing to do. Whatever may be the cause of it, the crisis expresses itself in events of daily experience of the common man and woman. They should be helped to learn the lesson of their own experience. A general consciousness of the crisis will then be created pragmatically. Once that is done, the desire to understand its causes will spread.

Man should not be suffocated by his environments, natural or social. Previously in quest of freedom, men ran away from life. Why fight an incomparably stronger adversary? It was wiser to withdraw from the losing battle and be in peace outside society, with the illusion of being beyond the reach of the forces of nature. Once upon a time, that might have been a possible escape. But today, none can really run away from the world. Human realities hunt the inhabitants even of the monasteries, Maths and Ashrams, if they are not callous hypocrits or mountebanks. The vicissitudes of human life cannot be ignored as illusion.

Man must fight for freedom. Spiritual liberation must be attained in this material world, unless it is to be a vain dream, a time-honoured deception. In proportion as man feels that he has the power to resist and overcome the various temptations of life, to that extent he is spiritually free. Man can want to be free, and capable of attaining freedom not only in imagination, but also in actual

life. That is the essence of humanist philosophy, which contributed more to the development of modern thought and culture than any other system of thought. But having provided the initial impetus for the tremendous development of modern times, why did Humanism cease to influence human affairs? The cause was that man's knowledge of himself lagged far behind his knowledge of the physical world. Man was given the place of primacy, yet man remained unexplained, to become in course of time a mystery to himself.

Such an idea of man was not consistent with the scientific spirit of the age; and Humanism came to be regarded as a romantic notion, which could be the subject matter only of art and literature. But since then, man's knowledge of himself has grown immensely. We may not as yet have definite knowledge of how life grew out of the background of inanimate matter; but for science, there is no doubt about the continuity of evolution. There is no reason to believe that life was breathed into the physical process from outside. It is inherent in the process. Since so much more is known than fifty years ago, no body can reasonably maintain that man's knowledge about himself has reached the limit. We may not know everything about life as yet, but there is nothing unknowable. Whatever exists is accessible to human understanding.

Rising out of the background of the physical Universe, man incorporates the best of creation. If there is any creative power that is in him, it can operate only through him. It is held by many that man is bad, immoral, unthinking, and, therefore, there is no hope for the world. But the present knowledge about man allows the proposition that man is essentially rational. Every human behaviour, in the last analysis, is rational, however irrational it may appear. Morality results from man's intelligent response to his surroundings. Therefore, it can be deduced from his innate rationality. Since rationality is inherent in human nature, it is only necessary to remind him of his biological heritage, and he will regain faith in himself and undo the harm done to him. Having realised the mistakes of the past, and trying to rectify them, modern mankind will find a way out of the crisis of our time, and begin marching forward to much greater achievements than those of the past.

The burning problem of our time is the problem of morality,

particularly, of social morality, of finding a common norm for moral behaviour. If moral sense is referred to intuition, one can never tell how two men will act in a similar situation; because, it is not known how intuition or instinct operates. So, there cannot be a common norm for human behaviour. Intuitional morality, therefore, cannot be normative. In the absence of objective standards, moral values are relegated to the dream land.

There must be a sanction which can stand the test of reason. The knowledge about man, of biology, physiology and psychology, warrants the assertion that man is a rational being, and therefore, if the sense of morality is referred to his innate rationality, values can be derived from facts. In this manner, we can have objective standards of morality. Only when goodness can be rationally conceived, there can be a common norm of goodness. The understanding of the essence of man, the discovery of the fact that man is essentially rational, solves the problem. As biological beings, all men are similarly constructed, and, therefore, are likely to react more or less in a similar manner under similar circumstances, provided that a minimum background of knowledge is given. With the ability of discrimination and judgment, all men, being similarly constructed, can be expected to react similarly in a similar situation, and the ability can be cultivated. That is the hope for the much desired introduction of morality in politics and generally in public behaviour.

The realisation of the possibility of a secular rational morality opens up a new perspective before the modern world. The time-honoured concepts of man's dignity, personality, sovereignty, creativeness, become full of meaning. The feeling that by himself man can never be good fills him with a sense of helplessness; and helplessness follows. Spiritual liberation is the condition for social and political liberation. It must be realised that human existence is self-contained and self-sufficient; and that, therefore, man can find in himself the power to work out his destiny, to make a better world to live in. This self-realisation in the revealing light of the knowledge about himself will restore man's confidence in himself and create the condition for the resolution of the moral crisis of our time.

These ideas will certainly appeal to all sensitive human beings. But most of them will still be doubtful about the possibility of practising them. And that is the core of the crisis of our time; it shows

how man has lost faith in himself. To appreciate the goodness of an idea, and yet to feel helpless as regards its practicability, is really a tragedy. One must do only what is practical, and if good ideas are not practical, man must act according to bad ideas!

There have been innumerable moralists, from time immemorial. They have preached high ideals, which were never practised. In order to introduce morality in public life, some people must begin with practising the ideas they preach. The modern world does look like a madhouse. Appeal to reason gets lost in the storm of emotions running wild. Preaching, therefore, is futile. But a group of men who will live rationally and morally will make miracles, and their example will become an irresistible contagion.

By merging man into the masses, politicians and social engineers have created a monster which responds riotously only to appeals to passion—hatred, greed, lust for power. Man has been debased to the level of unthinking beast, to serve the purpose of power politics. Political parties need votes to come to power. It is easier to sway the people by appeals to their emotions and prejudices than to their reason. The more backward a people, the more easily they are swayed by appeals to emotions and prejudices. Therefore, to keep the people backward has become the result of modern democratic politics. They say that power corrupts. But it is believed that power corrupts only the corrupt people. The incorruptible has never any chance to come to power. Therefore, democracy has everywhere degenerated into demagoguery. The other alternative of capturing power through violent revolution, and then imposing social change from above, has also not produced any better results.

NOTES

1. "The nineteenth century was an epoch of civilised advance—humanitarian, scientific, industrial, literary, political. But at length, it wore itself out, and marked the decisive turn of human life into some new direction, as yet not fully understood.... The values of life are slowly ebbing. There remains the show of civilisation without any of its realities." (A.N. Whitehead, *The Adventure of Ideas*).
2. One of the intellectual problems of the late Victorian era was how to accommodate Christianity in a society undergoing vast changes in

its structure, its wealth and technology. (See Alan Wilard Brown, *The Metaphysical Society: Victorian Minds in Crisis*).

In France, Victor Cousin carried on a crusade against "shallow Materialism" and criticised the "misplaced scientific enthusiasm" of the earlier rationalists.

Chapter XXIII

THE WAY OUT

ALL THOUGHTFUL believers in a future of humanity must be deeply perturbed by the gloomy perspective of the contemporary world. But they must not simply stand aghast, paralysed by the feeling of helplessness amounting to fatalism. They must think furiously so as to lay bare the cause of the malady threatening the very existence of the civilised world, and act boldly to exterminate it.

To begin with, the voice of reason must be raised to warn the progressive world against the different varieties of orthodoxy and blind passion which are creating an atmosphere of stark madness. It is singularly thoughtless and almost criminally irresponsible to take the fatalistic view that yet another war is inevitable and to hold that it will demolish the old world and clear the ground for a new. This view may be in consonance with the Marxist doctrine of economic determinism; in reality, it betrays a woeful ignorance of the dynamics of human culture and represents the cynicism of the unfounded conviction that the so-called "pre-history"¹ is bound to be ruled by the law of the jungle.

One does not require a very high degree of imagination to realise that another world war will have the most disastrous consequences, most probably amounting to a complete breakdown of modern civilisation. The greatest possible efforts must be made to head off that threatening catastrophe. That objective can be attained only by replacing antiquated political doctrine and theoretical postulates about a utopia which history had mercilessly exploded. Neither the so-called Western democracy nor Russian Communism can head off another war, towards which the world is drifting as it were by fate. Neither of the rivals provides a sufficiently inspiring leadership capable of taking the contemporary world out of the crisis. One has only a threadbare institutionalism to offer

as the panacea for all evils; the other on the contrary, still holds out an ideal which, in the process of realisation, has lost all the fascination of a utopia, and appears to be repelling for all who fought to free the world from totalitarian domination and spiritual regimentation.

The progressive world, which still pursues the ideals of democratic freedom and economic equality, and cherishes the human heritage of cultural values, is torn between the two rivals for the leadership of the post-war world. In the absence of a common code of behaviour and standard of values there can be no unity of purpose and, therefore, no escape from tormenting doubts, corroding suspicions, cynical efforts to stab each other in the back, and the general instability and fear of an impending catastrophe. In this gravest crisis of its entire history, the civilised world needs a new hope, a new faith, a new ideal, suitable for the conditions of our time.

The philosophy which will give modern mankind a new hope and a new faith must put a concrete content into the concept of freedom. If the liberating possibility of social organisations and political institutions is still to be judged by divergent ideological prejudices, discordant doctrines and conflicting dogmas, common efforts for overcoming the present crisis and for promoting human progress will remain a matter of wishful thinking. A common standard of freedom alone can make such common efforts possible.

The quest for freedom can be referred back to man's struggle for existence. It accounts for the triumph of man over nature in course of his efforts to satisfy his biological needs. It provides the basis for his constant search for knowledge, which enables him to be progressively free from the tyranny of natural phenomena, physical and social environments. The quest for freedom, therefore, is a continuation of the biological struggle for existence. In modern society, an individual to be free must not only be able to enjoy economic sufficiency and security, but also live in a psychological atmosphere, free from cultural regimentation helpful to the development of his intellectual and other human potentialities. Progressive attainment of freedom in this wide sense by the individuals composing society should provide the criterion for judging the merits of social organisation. Guided by the dictum of ancient wisdom that man is the measure of everything, the philosophy of the future should proclaim that the merit of any pat-

tern of social organisation or political institution is to be judged by the actual measure of freedom it affords to the individual.

Whether it is the nation or a class, any collectivity is composed of individuals. Society is a creation of man, in quest of freedom. Cooperative social relationships were established originally with the purpose of reinforcing the struggle for existence, which the primitive man has undertaken as individual; as such, it is the basic urge for all social advancement. The function of social relationships, therefore, should be to secure for individuals, as individuals, the maximum measure of freedom. The sum total of the quanta of freedom actually enjoyed by its members individually is the measure of the liberating or progressive significance of any social order.

No political philosophy nor any scheme of social reconstruction can have more than a very limited revolutionary significance, if it dismisses the concept of individual freedom as an empty abstraction. A political system and an economic experiment which subordinates the man of flesh and blood to an abstract collective ego cannot possibly be a suitable means for the attainment of the goal of freedom. It is absurd to argue that negation of freedom is the road to freedom. The purpose of all rational human endeavour, collective as well as individual, should be the attainment of freedom in ever larger measure, and freedom is real only as individual freedom.

A new world of freedom will not result automatically from an economic reorganisation of society. Nor does freedom necessarily follow from the capture of political power by a party claiming to represent the oppressed and the exploited classes. The abolition of private property, State ownership of the means of production and planned economy do not by themselves end exploitation of labour nor lead to an equal distribution of wealth. By disregarding individual freedom on the plea of taking the fullest advantage of modern technology, of efficiency and collective effort, planned economy defeats its own purpose. Instead of ushering in a higher form of democracy on the basis of economic equality and social justice, it establishes a political dictatorship. Economic democracy is no more possible in the absence of political democracy than the latter is in the absence of the former.

It is assumed that planned economy will guarantee the greatest good to the greatest number; in other words it will mean equal

distribution of wealth and establish social justice. In that case it should be possible to reconcile planning with freedom. Dictatorship of any kind, however plausible may be the pretext for it, is inconsistent with the ideal of freedom.

The practice of Western democracy is equally disappointing. Traditional democratic Socialism, therefore, also does not inspire any confidence of success. Democracy must reorientate itself. It must revert to its humanist tradition. It must not be limited to the counting of heads, particularly when the heads have not the opportunity to raise themselves with sovereign dignity. Formal Parliamentarism must be replaced by actual democratic practice. Democratic practice which is no more than mere counting of heads, in the last analysis, is also a homage to the collective ego. It allows scope neither for the individual nor for intelligence. Under the formal Parliamentary system intelligence, integrity, wisdom and moral excellence, as a rule, count for nothing. Yet unless the purifying influence of these human virtues is brought to bear upon the political organisation and administration of society, the democratic way of life can never be realised.

It is idle to condemn dictatorship on the ground that regimentation precludes the creation of human values, so long as those values are not allowed to influence public affairs even under the so-called democratic regimes. To wean the unthinking world away from the appeal of dictatorship, postulated as a shortcut, indeed as the only way, to freedom, democracy must recover the humanist tradition of modern culture. Man must again be the measure of things. Intelligence integrity, wisdom and moral excellence should be the test of leadership. Democracy can no longer be taken simply for granted. Today all thoughtful lovers of freedom are perturbed by the challenging question: Is democracy possible? The fundamental democratic principle—the greatest good to the greatest number—can be realised only when the conduct of public affairs will be in charge of spiritually free individuals who represent their own conscience before anybody or anything else.

Moral sanction, after all, is the highest sanction. The real guarantee of Parliamentary democracy is not law, but the moral conscience of the majority in power. In the last analysis, dictatorship also rests on a moral sanction; it claims to be the means to a good end. But group morality is a doubtful guarantee against individuals. Therefore, a government composed of spiritually free indi-

viduals accountable in the first place to their respective conscience, is the only possible guarantee for securing the greatest good to the greatest number. Democracy must have that philosophical reorientation, if it is to survive the present crisis and resist the powerful onslaught of dictatorship.

The demand is not for a rule of the intellectual elite, but a social organisation which will give unlimited scope for the unfolding of the creative genius of man by placing the executive power of the State under the control of free individuals—free from the influence of vested interests and also from the vagaries of the collective ego, so very susceptible to demagogic appeals. Demorcastic practice should not be confined to periodical elections. Even if elections are by universal suffrage, and the executive is also elected, democracy will still remain a mere formality. The delegation of power, even for a limited period destroys democracy for all practical purposes.

Democracy can be real only when the State is reared on a foundation of local republics. The primary function of the latter will be to make individual citizens fully conscious of their sovereign rights and enable them to exercise the same intelligently and conscientiously. The broad basis of the State, thus coinciding with the entire society, will be composed of a network of local political schools, so to say. The right of recall and referendum will enable organised local democracies to wield a direct and effective control on the entire State machinery. They alone will have the right to nominate candidates for election to various legislative bodies. Such a democracy will transcend the limits of party politics. Individual men will have the chance of being recognised on their merits. Party loyalty and party patronage will no longer eclipse intellectual independence, moral integrity and detached wisdom.

What is needed is creation of conditions under which democracy will be possible. In the first place, there must be a conscious and integrated effort to stimulate amongst the people the urge for freedom, the desire to rely upon themselves, the spirit of free thinking and the will never to submit to any external authority by exchanging their freedom for the security of the slave. A new Renaissance based on rationalism and cosmopolitan. Humanism, is essential for democracy to be realised. Such an atmosphere will foster intellectual independence dedicated to the cause of making human values triumph. Moral excellence alone can mould a com-

munity together without sacrificing the individual on the altar of the collective ego, be it of the nation or a class. Individuals possessed of that great virtue will command the respect of an intelligent public and be recognised as the friends, philosophers and guides of society.

The inspiration for a new philosophy of revolution must be drawn from the tradition of Humanism and moral Radicalism. The nineteenth century Radicals actuated by the humanist principle of individualism, realised the possibility of a secular rationalism and a rationalist ethics. They applied to the study of man and society the principles and methods of the physical sciences. The positive knowledge of nature—living as well as intimate—being so much greater today than a hundred years ago, the scientific approach to the problems of man's life and inter-relations is bound to be more successful. Today, we can begin with the conviction that it is long since man emerged from the jungle of pre-history, that social relations can be rationally harmonised, and that therefore appreciation of moral values can be reconciled with the efforts to replace the corrupt and disintegrating *status quo* by a new order of democratic freedom. A moral order will result from a rationally organised society because, viewed in the context of his rise out of the background of a harmonious physical Universe, man is essentially rational and, therefore, moral. Morality emanates from the rational desire for harmonious and mutually beneficial social relations.

Any effort for a reorganisation of society must begin from its unit—from the root, so to say. Such an effort to develop a new philosophy of revolution on the basis of the entire stock of human heritage, and then to elaborate the theory and formulate the principles of the practice of political action and economic reconstruction, therefore, can be called New Humanism—new because it is Humanism enriched and elaborated by scientific knowledge and social experience gained during the centuries of modern civilisation.

So many doctrines have been preached, so many theories expounded, that one more will not deserve the attention of seriously thinking people, unless it is really something new. But at the same time, there is nothing entirely new under the sun. History is not a succession of standing miracles. Something never comes out of nothing. The new is only an emergent value. Novel-

ties result from the unfolding of the potentialities inherent in man. The ideas here presented as the outlines of a new philosophy of revolution have been crystallising in the minds of thinking men throughout the world, who all reacted to the greatest crisis of human history in the like manner. They result from a philosophical interpretation of human history, from a revaluation of the values which, as the common heritage of mankind, transcend space and time. In the revealing light of this reorientation the civilised mankind will be able to penetrate the gloom that hangs on the modern world, and see what the future holds in store for it.

Ever since the days of Plato, the fundamental problem of politics has been relation between the State and the individual. All this time, the problem baffled political thinkers to such an extent that modern political philosophy poses the individual as the antithesis of society. If it is true that the individual is antithetical to society, that social progress is not possible except at the cost of individual freedom, which cannot be harmonised with social organisation, then, the entire human history has been a failure. Consequently, there is no future for the world except the picture of a mechanised monstrosity ever engaged in the grim task of self-destruction. An endeavour to find a way out of the present crisis, therefore, must begin with a re-examination of the fundamental problem of the relation between society and the individual, between the individual and the State.

Political thought has gone from one fallacious doctrine to another because of the failure to reconcile this relation. In ancient times, the failure was unavoidable. Ignorance shrouded the origin of man and also of society. Under those circumstances, man tried to peep through that shroud with the help, mainly, of his imagination. But it is no longer necessary to grope in the dark and set up political theories on metaphysical assumptions. Biology and anthropology have acquired enough empirical knowledge to trace the descent and evolution of man and also the origin of society. There is no room for any doubt that society is a creation of man. The individual, therefore, is prior to society and the State. The latter are the means for attaining the end of freedom and progress of man. Nevertheless, the end has been forgotten, and the means has become all in all. A false idea about the place of man in society is the cause of reversing the relation between the end and the means and the separation of ethics from political practice and social engineering.

Even sociological doctrines which reject Marxism preach that the individual is an abstract concept. It is argued that, like the atom in modern physics, the individual is an abstraction—a non-existing social atom. The corollary to this doctrine must be that society was created by some super-human agency. Nevertheless, curiously enough, the collectivists also maintain that man is the maker of the social world. So, after all, it is admitted that society is a creation of man. Why did man create society, and how? He did it in course of his struggle for existence. Coming out of the background of biological evolution, the human species starts its struggle as individuals. In course of time, the isolated individuals realise that, together, they could carry on the struggle more successfully. That was the origin of society.

The essence of the struggle for existence is the urge for freedom. The early ancestors of the human race had to struggle against the wild forces of nature which threatened to crush them. They wanted to be free from those forces. That urge for freedom is a continuation of the biological struggle for existence. It is the basic incentive of all subsequent human progress. Thanks to that urge for freedom, mankind organised itself into society, with the object of carrying on the struggle for existence on a higher level. It is not rational to hold that the instrument which man created in his struggle for freedom should ultimately deprive him of his freedom, though it is indeed a fact that in course of time society did forge chains of slavery for man. In our time man created the machine and had been enslaved by it. But the biological heritage of the urge for freedom could not be altogether throttled. Man struggled for freedom through the ages. He is still struggling. The record of that struggle is the history of the world.

The basic idea of a new revolutionary social philosophy, therefore, must be that the individual is prior to society, and individual freedom must have priority over social organisation. But how is it possible for an individual to be free in a highly centralised modern society? Neither capitalist free enterprise nor Parliamentary democracy could solve the problem, although both professed the principle of individual liberty. Socialism or Communism frankly rejects the very notion of individual freedom. A solution of the crisis of our time, therefore, presupposes the possibility of an alternative political organisation of society, which will reconcile individual freedom with social organisation.

A revolutionary social philosophy capable of showing a way out of the crisis must be based on scientific knowledge and be deduced from a physical-realist (materialist) metaphysics. The doctrine of economic determinism is essentially teleological. Therefore, it cannot be logically deduced from the materialist philosophy. The recognition of the sovereignty of man is inherent in the very idea of revolution. But it cannot be harmonised with the doctrine of economic determinism. If man is a mere marionette in the hand of Providence or the forces of production, how could he ever make history and remake society to suit his purpose.

Idealism, not in the sense of denying the objective reality of material world, but of having due regard for the fact that ideas have always played an autonomous role in history, is implied in the doctrine that man creates society; and that humanist doctrine underlies the Marxist theory of revolution. The refusal to recognise the fact that from time immemorial ideas, born in man's brain, itself an outcome of the process of biological evolution, have preceded human action and thus stimulated historical developments, logically leads to teleology, if not ontology. Only sophistry can distinguish between absolute determinism of any sort and predestination. If the events of life and society were predetermined, man could never have any control on them or even conceive the idea of changing them. It makes no difference whether the absolute determining factor is believed to be a Divine Providence or the mysterious economic law or the means of production. In any case, man is not a sovereign entity, and therefore, incapable of making his own destiny. Marxist economic determinism is no less antithetical to the idea of social revolution than the religious teleological view of nature, life and society.

The Marxist theory of social evolution suffers from yet another fallacy; and curiously enough it is the old fallacy of *regressus ad infinitum*,—another similarity with the religious view. The doctrine that social evolution is determined by the development of the means of production begs the question: who created the first means of production and how? The question is not analogous to that of the Final Cause. It suggests that social evolution is a continuation of the pre-human biological evolution, and that any logically consistent theory about it must begin with a plausible hypothesis regarding the differentiation of man from the anthropoid ape. Some day, the "missing link" may be discovered; but philosophical

anthropology no longer worries about the problem, which can be solved by conceptual thought, imagination, if you please.

One can imagine an exceptionally clever anthropoid ape hitting upon the idea of breaking a branch and using it for beating down fruits, instead of taking the trouble of climbing to the top of the tree. The first non-biological extra-organic tool was created then. The ability to prolong his arms with the help of some external means freed the descendant of the ancestors of man from the biological necessity of adaptation by growing limbs. The production of the original means of production was neither economically determined, nor was it determined physically, nor economically. The production of the first tool was a deed done by an animal possessed of a highly developed brain of the first ancestor of man—perhaps it could not as yet be distinguished from biological impulse—preceded the act of producing the original means of production. The first non-biological, extra-organic tool (limbs are also tools) was created by the ancestor of man in course of his struggle for existence, which provided the basic impulse of pre-human biological evolution.

The origin of the laws of social evolution must be traced in anthropology, in the nature of man. Man is not a living machine, but a thinking animal. An impulse felt by an anthropoid ape, approximating rudimentary thought marks the birth of the species; the nature of man is determined by that event. In it, thought precedes action. Consequently ideas play an autonomous role in social evolution. They cannot be referred to economic origins, because thinking animals created tools and founded society. But ideas are neither *sui generis* nor of any metaphysical origin. They originate in the human brain, which is a lump of a specific physicochemical combination resulting from the entire process of biological evolution. The origin of idea is scientifically explained by tracing it in pre-human biological impulses. Biological evolution in its turn takes place in the context of physical nature, called the world of dead matter. The discovery of the physical origin of the mental phenomena solves the problem of dualism, which has baffled philosophy through the ages. Freed from the fatal fallacy, philosophy can proclaim the sovereignty of man; and thus liberated from the venerable belief that he is not an end by himself, that there is something beyond his life on this earth, that there are forces or factors which he can never understand or control—man can at

last logically conceive of the idea that he is the master of his destiny. This principle of scientific Humanism provides the solid foundation of a truly revolutionary social philosophy.

Human history, like natural history, is a determined process. But it is self-determined; and it is not absolute determinism. There are more than one determining factor, and they mutually limit their scope of operation. The dynamics of ideas and the dialectics of social development are parallel processes, both stimulated by man's biological urge for freedom. They naturally influence each other. A truly revolutionary social philosophy must recognise this basic truth of history. Only then it will inspire the will to reconstruct society without destroying individual liberty. If man is treated as an automaton, a small wheel in the gigantic social machinery, a puppet in the hand of the economic Providence called the forces of production, then the purpose of social revolution will be defeated. Instead of a commonwealth of free men, there will be a stream-lined, electrified prison-house, where a deceptive sense of security, if not actual physical comfort, will kill the inmates spiritually.

Man must be regarded as the archetype of society because the potentiality of evolving the entire gamut of social patterns is inherent in every individual. Therefore, he can discharge social responsibilities without surrendering liberty. A free community can be composed only of free men—men capable of being free. Thanks to his archetypal potentialities, man can take his place in a highly complicated modern society as a sovereign entity with the object of unfolding his potentialities in cooperation with others also pursuing the same purpose.

The impulse leading to the creation of society being the biological urge for survival felt individually by man, the social responsibility of individuals need not be obligatory. Under normal conditions, it is bound to be discharged voluntarily, because the preservation and evolution of society are necessary for enabling each of its members to unfold his or her potentialities. The concept of individual freedom, therefore, is not incompatible with social responsibility.

By tracing the roots of the urge for freedom in the background of the higher stages of biological evolution, a concrete content is put into the time-honoured concept of man's struggle for freedom is a continuation of the biological struggle for survival, on a higher

level. Therefore, freedom must be defined as progressive disappearance of the manifold impediments to the unfolding of the potentialities biologically inherent in man. Otherwise, memorable declarations, made ceremoniously in critical moments of history, such as, "man is born free" and "freedom is man's birthright", would be meaningless. If man as a biological being was not possessed of infinite potentialities of development, freedom would be a vain dream, an ideal never to be realised. It can be claimed as the birthright of man only when the struggle for it is known to be a biological heritage. Only so conceived freedom ceases to be an abstract concept and can be measured by concrete standards. The freedom of a particular social system is to be measured by the amount of freedom actually enjoyed by its individual members; and the measure is the opportunity afforded to each for the unfoldment of his potentialities; the latter being a concrete biological heritage, there cannot be any mysticism about them.

Countries may be nationally independent, economically prosperous and militarily powerful. It may appear as if the utopia of "Great Society" has been attained. Yet individuals composing them are not, necessarily, free, though their chains of servitude may be chains of gold. With the discovery of a concrete standard to measure freedom, fraud and fiction may no longer delude man. To experience freedom being the purpose of life, social progress can be empirically measured. If in the twentieth century man has not conquered greater opportunities for the unfolding of his biological potentialities, there is no reason to hold that the human race has progressed since the preceding centuries. Progress is not merely a succession of events in time. It consists of the significance of the succession, and the significance of any change can be judged correctly only by the position of the individual; the measure is the opportunity afforded to individuals to be better, more developed, more integrated, more articulate human beings. In other words, it is the advance made in the quest for freedom and search for truth.

Another distinctive feature of a truly revolutionary social philosophy results from the discovery of the interrelation between freedom and truth. In old social philosophies, freedom is an instrumental value; the new philosophy raises it to the status of a primary value. Freedom is an experience or ideal of human life whereas truth is a metaphysical category. How can the one be

related to the other?

On the human level, the biological struggle for existence and survival is no longer carried on through mechanical adaptations. It consists in purposive efforts for the conquest of nature. Purposiveness differentiates man from his immediate ancestors. With it, the blind struggle for survival becomes a conscious quest for freedom. In pursuit of the purpose of conquering nature, man develops science, which is a search for truth. The relation between truth and freedom thus is evident. Discovery of truth is the result of man's quest for freedom. On the other hand, expanding knowledge of nature increases man's power to conquer nature. Truth being the content of knowledge, its relation with man's quest for freedom is again evident.

Truth is correspondence with objective reality. Scientific knowledge does give us an approximate picture of what we are studying, either of the whole of nature or of any particular sector thereof. Therefore, truth can be described as the content of knowledge. We have the knowledge that two plus two is four. that is a truth. You can take any two things and add two more things, and the result will always be four things. That is an invariable phenomenon. It happens under all circumstances. It is said that truth is a mathematical concept. But mathematics is only a manner of measuring things, otherwise immeasurable, of judging statements of facts beyond the reach of direct experience. Thus quest for freedom does result in knowledge, and the content of knowledge is truth; knowledge always is acquaintance with reality. Truth being correspondence with reality, the content of knowledge is truth. Thus freedom, knowledge and truth can be woven harmoniously into the texture of one philosophy explaining all the aspects of existence—material, mental, moral. Such an all-embracing philosophy eliminates dualism, reconciles idealism with materialism, and accomodates ethics with naturalism. The search for truth being a corollary of the quest for freedom, itself a purposive continuation of the biological struggle for existence, the recognition of universal moral values cannot be repugnant to any theory and practice of social reconstruction, provided that it is undertaken with the purpose of promoting human freedom.

Social science cannot be isolated from natural science. Because, society is a part of nature, and biology traces the origin of life to the world of dead matter. The knowledge derived from the study

of the natural as well as social phenomena, integrated into one logically coherent system of ideas, will be the philosophy of our time. Such a philosophy will be the science of sciences, a distinction traditionally attached to it; it will also be in a position to guide human behaviour so as to harmonise social relations.

When dealing with the problems of economic and political practice, the problems of adjusting human relations and building institutions, one is advised to take what is called a practical, pragmatic point of view. In other words, the contention is that such activities should not be circumscribed by any theoretical convictions or philosophical principles. Politicians and economists must be practical men. They must try to solve their problems according to the possibilities of a given situation. It is said that, handicapped by preconceived idea, guided by one or another system of philosophy, one can neither be a successful politician nor a practical economist.

This idea of philosophy deluded the best of men, the noblest of souls. In quest of truth and search for knowledge, they kept themselves aloof from the affairs of the world, engaged in contemplation and introspection with the vain hope of finding the infinite in their finite selves. On the other hand, the bulk of mankind was not concerned with this sort of philosophy. If philosophy was indifferent to their problems, they had no use for philosophy. The artificial differentiation between the world of spirit and the world of matter led to the belief that there was no place for truth and moral values in the latter, which is, therefore, destined to be ruled by the laws of the jungle.

Confronted with this terrible tragedy, one must be constrained to admit that until now human behaviour generally has neither been guided by rational thinking nor by the love of truth and moral values. It could not be otherwise so long as those virtues were placed in the world of spirit; and the conduct of the affairs of the world of matter, the world of human being and becoming, of human sorrows and happiness did not have the benefit of a philosophy which placed the knowledge of truth within the reach of the human mind. The practice of the virtues of rational thinking, of the love of truth and moral values, by a growing number of men concerned with the problems of this world is the crying need of the day. The world needs a philosophy to bridge the gulf between spirit and matter. mind and body, and harmonise thought

and action.

But generally, philosophy is still believed to be of no concern for the people who are interested in affairs of this world. Philosophers are supposed to be indifferent to the troubles and tribulations of temporal life, and themselves to live in the world of mind and spirit. That is a false conception of philosophy, which has created a good deal of confusion and contributed considerably to the chaos of the modern world. Therefore, a restatement of the very philosophy proper—Cosmology, Ontology and Epistemology—has its practicability, its bearing on the daily life of human beings.

A hundred years ago, Karl Marx suggested that philosophy must come down from the dizzy heights of speculation to this world, if it was to serve any human purpose. His famous *Theses on Feuerbach* concludes with the declaration that, until now philosophers have tried to explain the world; the time has come to remake it. Since then various formulas and prescriptions for remaking the world have been offered. Nevertheless, today the hope of building a better world seems to be gone for ever. Modern civilisation is threatened with the danger of complete destruction. The crisis of our time affects not only the political, economic and social aspects of modern civilisation, it goes deeper and, therefore, it has been rightly characterised as a moral crisis—a crisis involving not only the corporate life of mankind, not only its social existence, but also the very being of man, man's mind, his spirit, his soul.

It is a gravely disturbing situation which breeds unbounded scepticism about the values of modern civilisation. But there are thoughtful people who still believe in the creative power of the human mind, who do not share the gloomy Spenglerian view that modern civilisation is doomed to perish. They are naturally anxious to find a way out of the crisis.

It goes without saying that any way out of the crisis presupposes action. In order to come out of the present situation of political uncertainty, economic insecurity and social chaos, which breed the danger of war, civilised mankind must act with determination. But action presupposes ideas; and a philosophy is a logically coordinated system of ideas. All classical schools of philosophy claimed to be rounded-up, closed systems. That notion of philosophy had to be discarded under the impact of scientific knowledge. No philosopher of our time offers a closed system of ideas. Ideas have a dynamics of their own, and no idea, however sublime can

claim finality at any period of the history of thought. Nevertheless, to be creative human action must be guided by rational thought. In the last analysis, the cause of the present crisis is a loss of equilibrium in human behaviour—preponderance of emotion over rational thinking and critical analysis.

It has even been maintained that thought paralyses action; that the spirit of enquiry leads to scepticism; that rational thinking confronts one with the fact of the limitation of human knowledge and the frustrations of human endeavours. With this view, a thoughtful person, particularly a philosopher tends to relapse into quietism, believing that no human effort can change the affairs of the world. The corollary to this so-called philosophic attitude is neo-mysticism. It is reinforced by those schools of modern psychology which attach supreme importance to intuition and come to the conclusion that human action is primarily guided by mysterious urges uncontrollable by reason or intelligence. The contention is that emotions cannot be analysed to a rational foundation. If that is a biological truth, then no human action can be controlled. Therefore, it is necessary to ascertain if emotions are the only incentives to action; and if emotions themselves cannot be controlled by reason.

All the promising formulas and prescriptions for a reconstruction of society failed, because instead of appealing to reason, they also attached primary importance to emotions; their protagonists inflamed one set of emotions against another. A critical examination of those promising but pragmatically disappointing panaceas is a precondition for the discovery of a way out of the present crisis. The effort is being made individually or in cooperation by sensitive minds throughout the world. It is significant that they have reached the same conclusion. The common demand is for a humanist revival. It is a reaction to the cult of collectivism running rampant throughout the world for the last two generations.

All the conflicting schools of current political thought—Conservative, Liberal, Socialist, Communist—have one thing in common; to submerge man into the mass. Society is a creation of man. History is a record of human activity. Political institutions were created by man. Yet these creations of man have reduced man to nothingness. The complete subordination of the creator to his creation is the core of the present crisis. Therefore, a humanist

revival, that is, restoration of man in his proper place of primacy and sovereignty, is the only way out of the crisis.

NOTES

1. See: *Communist Manifesto*, by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

pure reason of speculative thought alone could penetrate the mysteries of the super-sensual, transcendental realm to which they belong.

As a part of speculative philosophy, ethics refused to recognise its secular sanction revealed by the light of biological knowledge, and failed to find its roots in man himself. In contradistinction to this, social and political philosophy came under the influence of rationalism, though as yet largely metaphysical, and of anthropology, philology and ethnology. It seemed that there was no causal relation between ethical values and the world of science. Moral philosophy was baffled by the problem of deducing values from facts. Social behaviour and political events, also being empirical facts, appeared to be beyond the jurisdiction of axiology. Religion, in the last analysis, remained the only sanction of morality. But in proportion as science undermined the faith in the supernatural, religion became a mere conventionality. Consequently, the position of morality in public life became very precarious. With the modern believing man, religion is the anchor or a mere pre-occupation of private life. Having no bearing upon the public life, it logically cannot dictate the norms of his social behaviour and political practice. Social behaviour and political practice were thus completely divorced from moral values which, anchored in religion, could have meaning only in man's private life. The position is much worse with the frankly religious, whose number is legion in the modern world.

Fortunately, the end of an epoch has been reached. Science and philosophy can no longer be kept in watertight compartments. The disappearance of the traditional differentiation between two currents of human thought is the most outstanding feature of the advanced intellectual life of our age. Time, Space, Substance, and Causality used to be categories of pure thought, problems of metaphysical speculation. They have come under the jurisdiction of the empirical (including mathematical) enquiry of science, which has solved the problems.¹ On the one hand, what used to be called philosophy proper—Cosmology, Ontology and pistemology—has been merged into science; and on the other hand, the influence of science and its byproduct, technology, on social development and social philosophy, is undeniable. The result is the possibility of constructing a system of logically co-ordinated thought, embracing the totality of existence, nature, life and society. The roots of

the problems of social and individual life can now be traced down the entire process of biological and physical evolution, and the problems themselves be solved by the application of scientific knowledge. The riddle of the relation between facts and values disappears, because values themselves are also facts. Modern civilisation, in the sense of man's mind being enlightened by scientific knowledge, should not necessarily snap his moral moorings, because it is in his own self.

The urge for spiritual freedom, though it has remained largely in the realm of the subconscious, has been the lever of entire human development, ever since the birth of the species. It is the striving to feel that man is a free agent, that he can act according to his judgement, and is capable of discriminating good from evil and right from wrong without being haunted by the preoccupation that he is helplessly at the mercy of some capricious super-human power. Religion itself was an expression of man's urge for spiritual freedom. The history of religions, which traces critically the evolution of faith from animism to teleological rationalism, reveals that the tendency to outgrow itself is inherent in religion. The desire for freedom in social and political life, being an expression of the basic human urge for spiritual freedom, can be satisfied only by actions according to general principles deduced from a world view which does away with the necessity of assuming a supernatural power or metaphysical sanction. Only in a self-contained, self-operating, self-sufficient world, can man as a part of it claim to be free.

The question which has troubled man's mind from time immemorial is: How can man be free in this mortal world of experience? The purpose of social and political philosophy is to answer that old question, and the reply should include a prescription for practice. A satisfactory reply presupposes the possibility to prove that freedom is really man's birthright. The idea of the sovereignty of man acquires a greater meaning than a religious dogma or an *ad hoc* postulate of political philosophy when it is known that the urge for freedom is a biological heritage and is proved that man is capable of spiritual freedom, that is, to cast off the faith in a supernatural power or providential will. Modern scientific knowledge provides the evidence. The capacity to be free is in each individual; by being conscious of it, he becomes free; and a free society will be the creation of such spiritually free men.

At the close of the Middle-Ages in Europe, the archetypal man revolted against the tutelage of God and started moving towards the realisation that he could be self-sufficient and self-reliant. The classical revolt of man, reinforced by the expanding scientific knowledge, reached the highwater mark in the eighteenth century, when a great advance was made in the age-long effort to formulate a humanist social philosophy, including a secular ethics, on the basis of a materialist metaphysics. Since then, science penetrated deeper and deeper into the mysteries of life as well as of physical nature. Nevertheless, philosophical thought generally failed to keep pace, for reason explained in previous chapters. The tradition of the eighteenth century naturalist Humanism and of its development in the nineteenth century alone can inspire a philosophy which will set man free, spiritually as well as socially. Most appropriately, this philosophy should be called New Humanism; it is new, because it is scientific and integral; because it conceives human sovereignty not as a differentiation from the mechanistic processes of nature, but as their highest product.

The former conception of the sovereignty of man, associated with classical as well as romantic Humanism, logically leads to two alternative conclusions: one is the doctrine of free will; and the other is the old Stoic faith taken over by Christianity, that man is a moral entity, because through his soul he is in unison with the universal moral order. If it is not traced to the mechanism of biological evolution, free will assumes a mystic connotation: it is simply given in man as the token of his sovereignty; its origin cannot be traced. This mystic conception of free will imperceptibly converges towards transcendentalism. The alternative doctrine of man's sovereignty is frankly deduced from faith; therefore it could be taken over by Christianity. Granted its premiss, the Christian doctrine of morality is logically sound; a good case can be made out of it. But it breaks down as the foundation of a revolutionary social philosophy, revolutionary in the sense of regarding social evolution as the expression of man's inexhaustible creativeness. Transcendental morality, the belief that man can be moral only by the grace of God, destroys its own premiss. Man is a moral entity; therefore he is sovereign. But his sovereignty is derived from a greater or higher power. So, he is really not sovereign. The corollary is denial of human creativeness.

The choice between these two alternatives confronts any social

philosophy and ethics, because the doctrine of human sovereignty is the common point of departure. If the latter is chosen, as was done previously by all orthodox systems, the idea of freedom, whether social or spiritual, must go by the board. Sovereign by proxy, so to say, man can never be a free agent. Free will, consequently, becomes a mere euphemism. With such an equivocal sanction, ethics hangs in the air, and can have an apparently stable position only by laying down dogmatic norms of behaviour.

But without a sounder ethical doctrine, no really revolutionary social philosophy is possible. The central problem of ethics is that of the sanction of its values. If it could be found in man himself, the problem would be solved. But this solution brings back the problem of free will. The mystic conception atomises the individual and precludes the possibility of social organisation, co-operation and harmony in human relations. If man is simply given as God walking on earth, fully sovereign, absolutely free to act as he wills, and his will is of a mystic origin, then, the necessity of cooperation disappears, and society disintegrates.

The moral philosophy which traces the sanction of its values to intuition, may try to distinguish itself from the fundamentalist religious faith, but is, nonetheless, transcendental. If intuitions were not analysed down to mechanistic biological impulses, they must be traced to some mystic origin beyond human comprehension. So, in the last analysis, the elementary undefinable of the intuitive moral philosophy must be referred to some unknown and unknowable supernatural source. The alternative is to trace its roots down the entire process of prehuman biological evolution. Otherwise, intuitive morality cannot disown the charge of dogmatism.

For a more satisfactory solution of the problem of the sanction of morality, it is necessary to dig deeper into the subsoil of human existence. Previously, moral philosophers either raised their eyes to the heaven or searched for God in man. An appeal to his animal ancestry will yield more satisfactory result. A truly revolutionary social philosophy capable of inspiring action to lead modern civilisation out of the present crisis requires a revision of the classical doctrines of ethics, whether religious, rationalist, idealist or intuitive. If the sanction of morality is to be found in man himself, man must cease to be a mystic entity of the conception of early Humanism, classical and romantic alike.

The mystery of man has been solved by modern biology. Man is the outcome of biological evolution. In order to find the sanction of morality in man himself, and avoid at the same time the morass of mysticism, the roots of what is called conscience or moral sense must be traced in mechanistic biological functions articulated as instincts and intuitions. Biological evolution takes place in the context of the physical Universe, its mechanism being a part of the cosmic mechanism. Life grows out of the background of inanimate matter. The descent of man, therefore, can be traced to the law-governed physical Universe. Man's rationality and moral sense, which are causally connected, are the expression of cosmic harmony. Therefore, it is in the nature of man, as a biological organism, to be rational and moral, and as such he is capable of living with others in peace and harmony.

These arguments lead to the conclusion that a philosophy which can give man complete spiritual freedom and thus enable him to build a free and harmonious society will be a reformulation of old-fashioned Materialism. Indeed, Materialism, restated with the help of the latest scientific knowledge, is the only philosophy possible. Any other, in the last analysis, merges into religion or ends in the absurdity of solipsism. Indeed, ever since the dawn of civilisation, Materialism has been the most plausible hypothesis for rationalist philosophical thought and fruitful scientific investigation. The alternative views of life—religious, teleological, idealist, mystic—are also so many hypotheses. None of them could even prove its assumptions and verify its postulates. Materialism was the most plausible hypothesis, because the categories of its metaphysics were not unknowable, even if unknown as yet; its theorems could be proved because they did not invoke the authority of the supersensual. It provides the soundest philosophical foundation of the humanist view of life because, by abolishing the supernatural, it sets man spiritually free, capable of creating a world of goodness and harmony.

However, to provide the metaphysical foundation of a secular humanist ethics and a revolutionary social philosophy, materialism must be dissociated from certain notions which have been rendered untenable by the latest discoveries of science. Physics has discarded the old conception of matter, but it has not dissolved the physical Universe into nothingness or the fantasy of disembodied minds. The world is not made of indivisible atoms, "the

hard lumps of reality" of the Newtonian natural philosophy. But at the same time, Physics cannot do without the concept of substance—the substratum of the world of experience. The electro-magnetic field is not an abstract mathematical construction; it is measurable; therefore, it is a physical entity.

For these considerations, all really scientific objections to the term Materialism should be obviated if the new philosophy is called "Physical realism".² Even so revised and renamed, to avoid confusion, Materialism is vindicated as the only philosophy possible, provided that philosophy is defined as a logical coordination of all the branches of positive knowledge in a system of thought to explain the world rationally and to serve as a reliable guide for life.

Evolution is diversification. But the search for a unity underlying diversity is the oldest urge in man; and it is the foundation of philosophy. Attempts to understand and explain the world of experience have, throughout the ages, induced the human mind to trace the diversity of the phenomenal world to a common foundation. If that is anything other than matter, as it appears in the world picture of modern Physics, then it must be something beyond the reach of human comprehension; something metaphysical in the mystic sense; in other words, an object of faith. The only alternative to Materialism, thus, is religion. If modern science really compels rejection of the view that the Universe is a self-contained unitary whole, which functions without intervention of any force from outside, then, continuing his primordial search for unity, man must fall back on the primitive postulate of a creator or prime mover. This atavistic tendency is, indeed, gaining ground; the modern world is full of men of science in search of God. That curious phenomenon only reveals the profundity of the crisis of our time; it threatens a relapse into mediaevalism.

However, physical science does not warrant this dangerous atavism. There has, indeed, been a revolution in the notion of substance, but only perceptually, not in the conceptual sense. As a metaphysical (ontological) category, substance is a conceptual reality—an object of abstraction, of pure thought. Empiricism puts new content in it without affecting its validity as an abstraction. That is the relation between pure (speculative) thought and empirical knowledge, which together reveal truth.

Science is not pure empiricism. Conceptual thought and scientific method are not two different things. Both have a common

foundation. Experience creates concepts which are mental pictures. It taught man to speak, and through the medium of language, he constructed concepts which, in the course of time, became integral parts of his mind. Conceptual thought is generalisation of an abstraction from experience. Scientific thinking is stimulated by empirical knowledge, and is also informed and guided by man's conceptual equipments. These are not *a priori* categories.

Mental moulds and habits of thinking are not simply given. They represent empirical knowledge acquired by homo sapiens from time immemorial. Even the so-called verbal statements are statements of empirical knowledge. In this sense, the conceptual notion of substance is an *a priori* category of thought. So also are the notions of space, time and causality. Originally, these notions were acquired empirically, and in course of time conceptualised. Therefore, though in a sense categories of pure thought, creations of the human mind, they are not mental phenomena. They are abstractions from experience. New experience can never nullify them; it only enriches their ontological content.

Modern physical researches have revealed that the unitary substratum of the world of experience is not so constructed as it used to be conceived previously. It is differently constructed; but the conceptual notion of substance remains. The knowledge of reality has grown. The suggestion that substance is "mind stuff" or "mental stuff" cannot stand a searching criticism. However, it is admitted that there is a unitary foundation of the diversified existence. It being mathematically measurable, it must be a physical entity. If the world picture of modern Physics was a creation of the physicist's mind, then there would be little difference between scientific theories and poetry or any other work of art. Then, the physicist could dispense with his instruments of observation; and even do without the instrument of observation; and even do without the instrument of mathematical reasoning. Except in measurement (quantitative judgement), it is pointless to insist upon accuracy or exactitude; and measuring presupposes the existence of a measurable thing.

It goes without saying that the mind of the scientist with its conceptual equipment representing previously acquired empirical knowledge is as essential as the object he studies. Scientific knowledge is not purely objective. There is nothing like that in the world of experience. Not only in Psychology, but also even in Physics

the distinction between the subjective and the objective is meaningless and misleading. The scientist is a part of the objective world; the conceptual moulds of his mind reflect objective realities, because they are rooted in earlier experience of homo sapiens. But these considerations do not warrant denial of the physical world as an objective reality, its dismissal as a projection of the mind, something like a piece of art created out of imagination. The contention that Physics can do without the concept of substance logically leads to the absurd notion of disembodied mind. The body of the physicist is undoubtedly material. If substance is unreal, it is equally so. The scientist is mind without body.

Until now, philosophers postulated a world of matter and a world of mind, and created a vicious circle of dualism. The way out of the apparent difficulty is to be found in a combination of conceptual thought and empirical knowledge, of abstract reasoning and statements of facts. Materialist philosophy, restated as Physical Realism, shows the way out.

Protoplasm being a physical substance, there cannot be any unbridgeable gulf between the inanimate physical nature and the living world. All the manifestations of life, consciousness, intelligence, will can be traced down to a common origin, which is a physical substance. There is a red thread of continuity running through the entire process of cosmic evolution, including biological evolution. The vital and mental phenomena need no extra-physical explanation. Instincts and intuitions are not mysterious things, simply given to be regarded as elementary undefinables. The soul is a sum total of intellectual and emotional attributes of the human being. Scientific knowledge of the biological phenomenon, man, thus, rounds up the monistic philosophy of Physical Realism. Applied to the problems of social existence, it can be called New Humanism. It indicates a fully satisfactory approach to the problems of life in the light of a world view which does away with the necessity of assuming extra-physical categories. Man can be free because he is a part of a world which is self-contained and self-operating.

The Universe is a physical system. Having grown out of that background, the human being is also a physical system. But there is a great difference. The physical Universe is law-governed, the laws being inherent in itself, whereas man possesses will and can choose. Between the world of man and the world of inanimate

matter, there lies the vast world of biological evolution. The latter has its own specific laws which, however, can be referred back to the general laws of the world of dead matter. The living matter grows out of the background of dead matter; consciousness appears at a much later stage. Therefore, human will cannot be directly related to the laws of the physical Universe. It is rooted in the intervening biological world. But inasmuch as the entire process of biological evolution takes place in the context of the world of dead matter, human will cannot be an antithesis to the law-governedness of the physical Universe. Reason harmonises the two; and reason results from the consciousness of man's (the whole man's) being an integral part of the law-governed physical Universe.

Man did not appear on the earth out of nowhere; with his mind, intelligence, and will he is an integral part of the physical Universe. Man's being and becoming, his emotions, will, and ideas are also determined. Therefore, man is essentially rational. Reason in man is an echo of the harmony of the Universe. Morality must be referred back to man's innate rationality. Only then can man be moral, spontaneously and voluntarily. Reason is the only sanction of morality, which is an appeal to conscience; and conscience, in the last analysis, is nothing mystic or mysterious. It is a biological function, on the level of consciousness. The innate rationality of man is the only guarantee of a harmonious social order, which will also be a moral order, because morality is a rational function.

The axiology of New Humanism deduces all values from the supreme value of freedom. Freedom is the supreme value of life, because the urge for freedom is the essence of human existence. Indeed, it can be traced all the way down the entire process of biological evolution. Since all ethical values are derived from the biological heritage of man; they require no sanction which transcends human existence. To be moral, one needs only to be human; it is not necessary to go in search of divine or mystic metaphysical sanction. Humanist morality is evolutionary.

As soon as it appeared on the earth, the human species had to undertake the struggle with its environment for survival. That was the beginning of an endless struggle for freedom. Since then, all human achievements—cultural progress, scientific knowledge, artistic creations—have been motivated by the urge for freedom.

In the last analysis, the environment of human existence is the whole Universe. The latter being unbounded, man's struggle for survival is eternal; he will never conquer the Universe. His urge for freedom, therefore, is undying, eternal. He may not be always conscious of it; often he is not. Nevertheless, it is the basic incentive for him to acquire knowledge and conquer environments by knowing them. In course of the struggle for freedom, man discovers truth. It is neither a mystic-metaphysical category nor an abstract value. It is the content of man's knowledge. Therefore, it is a fact, objectively real.

The hierarchy of humanist axiology, thus, is freedom, knowledge, truth. They are not autonomous; they are interrelated, logically as well as ontologically. Therefore, freedom cannot be attained by immoral means, nor an enlightened man be a liar.

In the past also, Humanism proclaimed the sovereignty of man. But man remained unexplained, and speculation about the essence of man led to mysticism and revival of religion. Thus, Humanism defeated itself. Thanks to the enrichment of scientific knowledge, it can now be freed from all fallacies. It needs no longer be misguided by mystic and metaphysical notions about the essence of man. Starting with a clear understanding of the being and becoming of man, Humanism can now rule out all such speculations as in the past led to the subordination of man to imaginary forces beyond his comprehension. All human attributes—intelligence, reason, will, instinct, intuition—are rooted in the process of biological evolution antecedent to the appearance of *homo sapiens*. The capacity to acquire knowledge, as distinct from the common biological property of awareness, differentiates man from his animal ancestry. Knowledge endows him with the power to carry on the endless struggle for greater and greater freedom, and search for truth.

Scientific knowledge liberates man from the time-honoured prejudices about the essence of his being and the purpose of life. It reveals the truth about human nature. Man is essentially a rational being. His nature is not to believe, but to question, to enquire and to know. He gropes in the darkness of ignorance, helpless victim of a blind faith in forces beyond his comprehension and control, until knowledge illuminates his path. The only truth accessible to man is the content of his knowledge. When the light of truth makes his innate rationality more manifest, he can discard old hypothe-

ses based on ignorance.

New Humanism proclaims the sovereignty of man on the authority of modern science, which has dispelled all mystery about the essence of man. It maintains that a rational and moral society is possible because man, by nature, is rational and, therefore, can be moral, not under any compulsion, but voluntarily; that the sanction of morality is embedded in human nature.

In so far as it shows a way out of the crisis of our time, New Humanism is a social philosophy. But, as such, it is deduced from a general philosophy of nature, including the world of matter and the world of mind. Its metaphysics is Physical-Realist; and its cosmology is mechanistic. Conceptual thought and sense perceptions are harmonised in its epistemology. It merges Psychology into Physiology, and relates the latter to Physics through Chemistry. It bases ethics on rationalism, and traces the roots of reason in the orderliness of nature and harmony of the physical Universe.

By tracing will and reason, emotion and intelligence, to their common biological origin, New Humanism reconciles the romantic doctrine of revolution, that man makes history, with the rationalist notion of orderly social progress. History being the record of human endeavour, and man being an integral part of the law-governed Universe, history is not a chaotic conglomeration of fortuitous events. Social evolution is a determined process. But New Humanism rejects Economic Determinism, which is deduced from a wrong interpretation of the materialist philosophy. Human will is the motive force of social evolution; it is, indeed, the most powerful determining factor of history. Otherwise, there would be no place for revolutions in a rationally determined process of social evolution. A revolution is acceleration in the tempo of the evolutionary process, brought about by the will of a minority of men. But human will, as well as ideas, can seldom be referred directly to economic incentives.

Ideation is a psychological process. But once ideas are formed in the mind of man, they exist by themselves, governed by their own laws. The dynamics of ideas runs parallel to the dialectics of social evolution, the two influencing each other mutually. But in no particular period of history can a causal relation be traced between social events and movements of ideas. Patterns of culture and ethical systems are not mere ideological superstructures of established social relations. They are also determined, by the logic of the history of ideas.

New humanism holds that, for creating a new world of liberty and social justice, revolution must go beyond an economic reorganisation of society. The urge for freedom being the basic incentive of life, the purpose of all rational human endeavour must be to strive for the removal of social conditions which restrict the unfolding of the potentialities of man. The success of this striving is the measure of freedom attained. The position of the individual is the indicator of the progressive and liberating significance of any collective effort or social system.

New Humanism lays emphasis on the basic fact of history that man is the maker of his world—man as a thinking being, and he can be so only as an individual. The brain is the instrument of thought; and it is individually owned. It cannot be possessed collectively. Revolutions are heralded by iconoclastic ideas conceived by gifted individuals. A brotherhood of men attracted by the adventure of ideas, keenly conscious of the urge for freedom, fired with the vision of a free society of free men, and motivated by the will to remake the world, so as to restore the individual in his position of primacy and dignity, will show the way out of the contemporary crisis of modern civilisation.

In the last analysis, education of the citizen is the condition for such a reorganisation of society as will be conducive to common progress and prosperity without encroaching on the freedom of the individual. New Humanism advocates a social reconstruction of the world as a commonwealth and fraternity of free men, by the cooperative endeavour of spiritually emancipated moral men.

New Humanism is cosmopolitan. A cosmopolitan commonwealth of spiritually free men will not be limited by the boundaries of national States,—Capitalist, Fascist, Socialist, Communist, or of any other kind,—which will gradually disappear under the impact of the twentieth century Renaissance of Man.

NOTES

1. See *Science and Philosophy*, by the author and also "*The Concept of Causality*" and "*Probability and Determinism*," by the same, in the *Humanist Way*, Vol. IV, Nos. 2 & 3.
2. This thesis I have expounded in detail, on the basis of an extensive survey of the latest discoveries of Physics, Biology and Psychology, in a book entitled *The Philosophical Consequences of Modern Science*, which will be published in the near future.

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Frazer, James	<i>The Golden Bough</i>

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| Freud, Sigmund | <i>Civilisation and Its Discontents</i> |
| Friedrich, J. | <i>Jahn Als Erzieher</i> |
| Galilec | <i>A Dialogue of the Two Systems of the World</i> |
| Ganzen, K.R. | <i>Richard Wagner, Der Revolutionaer das Naeunzehnte Jahrhundert</i> |
| Gentile, Giovanni | <i>Fascism and Culture</i> |
| Giraud, Victor | <i>Le Christianisme de Chateaubriand</i> |
| Godwin, William | <i>Political Justice</i> |
| Goethe, J.W. von | <i>Dichtung und Wahrheit</i> |
| | <i>Faust</i> |
| | <i>Goetz von Berlichingen</i> |
| | <i>Sorrows of Werther</i> |
| Gooch, G.P. | <i>Frederick the Great</i> |
| Graham | <i>Socialism New and Old</i> |
| Gravina | <i>Region Politica</i> |
| Gray, Alexander | <i>The Socialist Tradition</i> |
| Gray, John | <i>Lectures on Human Happiness</i> |
| Green, T.H. | <i>Lectures on Political Obligation</i> |
| Grierke, Otto von | <i>Johannes Althusius</i> |
| Grimmelshausen | <i>Der Abenteuerliche Simplicissimus</i> |
| Grotius, Hugo | <i>De Jure Belli et Pacis Prolegomena</i> |
| Guizot, Francois | <i>L'Histoire de France</i> |
| Guyau, M. | <i>The Non-Religion of the Future</i> |
| Haldane, J.B.S. | <i>Facts and Faith</i> |
| Hall, Charles | <i>The Effects of Civilisation</i> |
| Hallowell, John H. | <i>The Decline of Liberalism as an Ideology</i> |
| Harrington | <i>Oceana</i> |
| Hartley, David | <i>Observation on Man, His Frame, His Duty and His Expectations</i> |
| Hearnshaw, F.J.C. | <i>The Science of History</i> |
| Hegel, George W.F. | <i>Logic</i> |
| | <i>Phenomenology of Spirit</i> |
| | <i>Philosophy of History</i> |
| | <i>Philosophy of Law</i> |
| | <i>Philosophy of Right</i> |

	Ueber die Neuesten Innern Verhaeltnisse Wuerttemberg's
Herder, J.G. von	<i>Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte</i>
Hobbes, Thomas	<i>De Cive</i>
	<i>Leviathan</i>
	<i>Treatise on Human Nature</i>
Hodgskin, Thomas	<i>Labour Defended</i>
Holbach, Baron d'	<i>The System of Nature</i>
Hooker, Richard	<i>Ecclesiastical Polity</i>
Hoskins, Charles H.	<i>Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science</i>
Hotman, Francis	<i>Franco-Gallia</i>
Hugo, Victor	<i>Actes et Paroles</i>
	<i>Chatiment</i>
	<i>L'Ane</i>
	<i>Le Pape</i>
	<i>Les Legendes des Siecles</i>
	<i>Les Miserables</i>
	<i>L'Homme qui Rit</i>
	<i>Notre Dame</i>
	<i>Religion et Religion</i>
Humboldt, Alexander	<i>Cosmos</i>
Hume, David	<i>Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</i>
Ibn Khaldun	<i>Universal History</i>
Jahn, F. Ludwig	<i>Volkstum</i>
	<i>Werke</i> (Edited by Karl Euler)
James, William	<i>The Varieties of Religious Experience</i>
Kant, Immanuel	<i>Critique of Pure Reason</i>
	<i>Metaphysical Basis of the Theory of Law</i>
Klopstock	<i>The Messiah</i>
Kolnai, A.	<i>War Against the West</i>
Krantz, Emile	<i>Essai sur l'Esthetique de Descartes</i>
La Boetie	<i>Voluntary Servitude</i>
Lagarde, Paul de	<i>Schriften fuer Deutschland</i>
Lamartine, Alphonse	<i>Le Livre du Peuple</i>

Maywald	<i>Die Lehre von Zweifacher Wahrheit, Ein Versuch der Trennung von Theologie und Philosophie im Mittel-alter</i>
McCurdy, E.	<i>The Mind of Leonardo da Vinci</i>
Menger, A.	<i>The Right to the Whole Produce of Labour</i>
Michelet, Jules	<i>History of France Le Peuple Oeuvres Choieses de Vico Universal History</i>
Mill, J.S.	<i>On Liberty</i>
Milton, John	<i>Areopagitica Paradise Lost</i>
Mirandolla, Picco D.	<i>Discourse on the Dignity of Man</i>
Moleschott, Jacob	<i>Kreislauf des Lebens</i>
Montesquieu, C.L. de	<i>Esprit des Lois Grandeur et Decadence des Romains</i>
Morelly, Abbe	<i>Les Codes de la Nature, Ou le Veritable Esprit de ses Lois Tout Temps Neglige ou Meconnu</i>
Morley, John	<i>Life of Diderot</i>
Muratori	<i>Della Perfetta Poesia Italiana</i>
Myers, John	<i>The Dawn of History</i>
Neff, Emery	<i>The Poetry of History</i>
Nietzsche, Friedrich	<i>Ecce Homo The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music Wille zur Macht</i>
Nordau, Max	<i>Degeneration</i>
O'Brien, Bronterre	<i>The Poor Man's Guardian</i>
Paine, Thomas	<i>Rights of Man</i>
Palley, William	<i>Natural Theology</i>
Palmieri, Mario	<i>The Philosophy of Fascism</i>
Pascal, Blaise	<i>Penses</i>
Pellisier	<i>Voltaire, Philosophe</i>

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| Petrarch | <i>Aspects of Nature</i> |
| Pirenne, Henri | <i>Economic and Social History of Mediaeval Europe</i> |
| Plekhanov, George | <i>History of Materialism</i> |
| Poggio | <i>Miseries of the Human Condition</i> |
| Polloc, Frederick | <i>Essays in Law</i> |
| Pound, Roscoe | <i>The Spirit of the Common Law</i> |
| Ptolemy | <i>Almagest</i> |
| Raleigh, Walter | <i>Some Authors</i> |
| Ranke, Leopold von | <i>History of the Reformation in Germany</i> |
| Rashdall, Dean H. | <i>The Universities of Mediaeval Europe</i> |
| Read, Carveth | <i>Man and His Superstitions.</i> |
| Renner, Karl | <i>The Institutions of Private Law and Their Social Functions</i> |
| Renouvier, Charles | <i>Philosophie Analytique de l'Histoire</i> |
| Reyburn, H.A. | <i>Nietzsche: The Story of a Human Philosopher</i> |
| Richter, J.P. | <i>The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci</i> |
| Robinet | <i>Nature</i> |
| Robertson, J.G. | <i>The Genesis of the Romantic Theory</i> |
| Rocquain, F. | <i>The Revolutionary Spirit Previous to the Revolution</i> |
| Rosenberg, Alfred | <i>Mythus</i> |
| Rosenkranz | <i>Life and Works of Diderot</i> |
| Rousseau, Jean J. | <i>Confessions</i> |
| | <i>Discourse on the Origin of Inequality</i> |
| | <i>Emile</i> |
| | <i>Essay on the Origin of Languages</i> |
| | <i>Social Contract</i> |
| Rowse, A.L. | <i>The End of an Epoch</i> |
| | <i>The Use of History</i> |
| Roy, M.N. | <i>Science and Philosophy</i> |
| Ruege, Arnold (Ed.) | <i>Deutsche-Franzoesische Jahrbuecher</i> |
| Russell, Bertrand | <i>History of Western Philosophy</i> |

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| Sabatier, A. | <i>Outline of a Philosophy of Religion</i> |
| Sabine, G.H. | <i>A History of Political Theory</i> |
| Schopenhauer, A. | <i>The World as Will and Idea</i> |
| Schwarzschild, L. | <i>The Red Prussian</i> |
| Seignobos, Charles | <i>History of the Rise of Modern Civilisation</i> |
| Selby-Bigg, L.A. | <i>The British Moralists</i> |
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| Singer, Charles | <i>From Magic to Science</i> |
| Sismondi, Jean C. | <i>Nouveaux Principes d'Economie Politique ou de la Richesse dans ses Rapports avec la Population</i> |
| Souquet, Paul | <i>La Revolution Francaise</i> |
| Spavento, Bertrando | <i>Italian Philosophy in Its Relation to European Philosophy</i> |
| Stael, Madam de | <i>Letters on Rousseau</i> |
| Stephen, J. Fitzjames | <i>Liberty, Equality, Fraternity</i> |
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| | <i>The English Utilitarians</i> |
| Stewart, Dugald. | <i>Active and Moral Powers</i> |
| Strauss, David | <i>Life of Jesus</i> |
| Symond, J.A. | <i>The History of Renaissance</i> |
| Tallentyre, H. | <i>Voltaire</i> |
| Tawney, R.H. | <i>Religion and the Rise of Capitalism</i> |
| Taylor, A.J.P. (Ed.) | <i>The Opening of an Era</i> |
| Thiers, A. | <i>History of French Revolution</i> |
| Thompson, William | <i>Enquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth</i> |
| Thorndike, Lynn | <i>A History of Magic and Experimental Science</i> |
| | <i>The Encyclopedia and the History of Science</i> |
| Treitzschke, Heinrich | <i>History of Germany</i> |
| Troeltsch, Ernst | <i>Deutscher Geist und Westeuropa</i> |
| | <i>The Ideas of Natural Law and Humanity in World Politics</i> |
| Tylor, E.B. | <i>Primitive Culture</i> |
| Valla, Lorenzo | <i>Discourse on Pleasure</i> |

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| Vaughan, C.E. | <i>The Political Writings of Rousseau</i> |
| Vico, Giambattista | <i>Autobiography (Translated by M.H. Fisch and T.G. Goddard). Scienza Nuova</i> |
| Villari, P. | <i>Life and Times of Girolamo Savonarola</i> |
| Vinci, Leonardo da | <i>Note Book</i> |
| Vogt, Karl | <i>Koehler-Glaube und Wissenschaft</i> |
| | <i>Pictures on Animal Life</i> |
| Voltaire, Francois M. | <i>Treatise on Toleration</i> |
| Wagner, Richard | <i>Mein Leben</i> |
| Wagner, Rudolf | <i>Letters on Physiology</i> |
| Ware, J. | <i>The Privileges of the People</i> |
| Watham | <i>History of Science</i> |
| Weber, Max | <i>Protestant Ethics and the Rise of Capitalism</i> |
| Whitehead, A.N. | <i>The Advengtures of Ideas</i> |
| Windelband | <i>Kant-Studien</i> |
| Winternitz, J. | <i>The Theory of Relativity and Epistemology</i> |
| Witzenmann, Walter | <i>Politischer Atavismus und Sozialer Mythos</i> |
| Wundt, Wilhelm | <i>Ethics</i> |
| Zeller, Eduard | <i>History of German Philosophy</i> |
| Zweig, Stefan | <i>The Right to Heresy</i> |

A Select List of Names referred to M.N. Roy

Abelard, Peter (Pierre 1079-1142). French Philosopher and Theologian.

Agricola, Rudolphus (143-56), Dutch Humanist.

Alberti, Leone Battista (1404-72) Italian Architect, Musician and Humanist.

Alembert, Jean Le Rond d' (c.1717-1783) French Mathematician and Philosopher.

Alfonso of Aragon (1396-1458) Spanish Patron of Arts and Letters.

Althusius, Johannes (1557-1637) German Political Thinker.

Ambrose, Saint (c.340-397) Bishop of Milan.

Anaxagoras (c.500-c.428 B.C.) Greek Philosopher.

Anaximander (c.611-547 B.C.). Greek Philosopher.

Anaximanes (6th Century B.C.) Greek Philosopher.

Anselm, Saint (1033-1109) Archbishop of Centerbury.

Archemedes (287-212 B.C.) "Greek Mathematician, Physicist and Inventor.

Aristarchus of Samos (3rd Century B.C.) Greek Astronomer.

Ariosto, Ludovico (1474-1533) Italian Epic and Lyric Poet.

Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) Greek Philosopher.

Arnold of Brescia (1100-c. 1155) Italian Reformer.

Aquinas, Saint Thomas (1225-1274) Italian Theologian.

Augustine, Saint (354-430) Church Father, Bishop of Hippo and Theologian

Aurelius, Marcus also Marcus Aelius Aurelius Antonius (121-180) Roman Emperor
originally named as Marcus Arnius Verus.

Austin, John (1790-1859) English Jurist.

Averoes also Ibn-Rushd (1126-1198) Spanish-Arab Philosopher and Physician.

Avicenna also Ibn-Sina (980-1037) Persian Born Arab Philosopher and Physician.

Babeuf, Francis/Emile (1760-1797) French Political Agitator and Thinker.

Bacon, Francis (1561-1626) English Philosopher.

Bacon, Roger (c.1214-1294) English Philosopher.

Bailly, Jean Sylvan (1736-93) French Astronomer and Politician.

Barbarosa, Frederick I (c.1125-90) German King (1152-90).

Barbaroux, Charles Jean Marie (1767-1794) French Revolutionist.

Bartholomew's Day. Saint Bartholomew was one of Apostles of Jesus Christ. The
massacre of the Huguenots took place on the night of August 23-24, 1572,
the Eve of Saint Bartholomew's day. The massacre was instigated by Cath-
erine de Medici. Paris and other towns of France and cities bore the brunt
of the massacre.

Bauer, Bruno (1809-1882) German Young Hegelian.

- Bayle, Pierre (1647-1706) French Philosopher.
 Bazard (18th-19th Century). French Socialist.
 Bellamy, Joseph (1719-1790) American Theologian.
 Bentham, Jeremy (1748-1860) English Philosopher and Jurist.
 Berdyeu, Nicholas (1874-1948) Russian religious Philosopher. Forced into exile from Russia in 1922.
 Bergson, Henry (1859-1941) French Philosopher.
 Berkeley, George (1685-1753) Irish Bishop and Philosopher.
 Barnstein, Edward (1850-1932) German Socialist.
 Beveridge, William Henry (1879-1963) British Economist.
 Bismarck, von (1815-1898) 1st Chancellor of German Empire (1871-90).
 Blackstone, Sir William (1723-1780) English Jurist.
 Blake, William (1757-1827) English Poet and Mystic.
 Blanc, Louis (1811-1882) French Socialist.
 Blanqui, Lewis Auguste (1805-81) French Revolutionist and Radical Thinker.
 Boccaccio, Giovanni (1313-1375) Italian Literatureur.
 Bodin, Jean (1530-1596) French Political Philosopher.
 Bodmer, Jacob (1698-1783) Swiss-German Literatureur.
 Bohour, Pere (17th Century) French Literary Critic.
 Boileau-Depreaun, Nicolas (1636-1711) French Poet and Critic.
 Bolingbroke, Henry Saint John, Vscount (1678-1751) English Statesman and writer.
 Bosanquet, Bernard (1848-1923) English Philosopher.
 Bossuet, Jacques Benigne (1627-1704) French Bishop and Thinker.
 Boyle, Robert (1627-91) Irish Philosopher and Chemist. Noted for Royle's Law.
 Brahe, Tycho (1546-1601) Danish Astronomer.
 Bray, John. F. British Radical Author of *Labour's Wrong and Labour's Remedy* (1839).
 Bretinger, Johann Jakob (1701-1776) Swiss-German Literary Critic.
 Brishot, de Warville, Jacques Pierre (1754-93) French Revolutionist and Journalist.
 Broker, Berthold, Heinrich (1680-1707) German Poet.
 Bruno, Giordano (c.1548-1600) Italian Philosopher. Burned to death because of his views.
 Buckner, Ludwig (1824-99) German Young Hegelian.
 Buckle, Henry Thomas (1821-62) British Historiographer.
 Buffon, George-Louis Leclerc, Comte de (1707-88) French Naturalist and Author.
 Buonarrotti, Michelangelo (1475-1564) Italian Sculptor, Painter, Poet and Architect.
 Burckhardt, Jacob Christoph (1818-97) Swiss Cultural Historian.
 Burke, Edmund (1729-1797) British Statesman and Orator.
 Bury, John Bagnell (1861-1927) British Historian.
 Byron, George Gordon (1788-1824) English Poet.
 Cabanis, Pierre Jean Georges (1757-1810) French Physician and Philosopher.
 Cabet, Etinne (1788-1856) French Socialist and Reformer.
 Caesar, Julius (c.102-44 B.C.) Roman Statesman and General.
 Calvin, John (1509-64) French Protestant Theologian of the Reformation.
 Cambon, Pierre Joseph (1767-1820) French Diplomat.
 Campanella, Tommaso (1568-1639) Italian Renaissance Thinker.
 Canning, Stratford (1786-1880) British Diplomat.
 Carlyle, Thomas (1795-1881) Scottish Essayist and Historian.

- Carnot, Lazare Nicolas Marguerite (1753-1823) French Revolutionist.
 Cassirer, Ernst (1874-1945) German Philosopher.
 Castellion, Sebartier (1515-63) French Protestant Theologian.
 Castiglione, Baldassare, Comte (1478-1529).
 Cervantes Saevedra, Miguel de (1547-1616) Spanish Literateur. Author of *Don Quixote*.
 chamberlain, Houston Stewart (1855-1927) Anglo-German Writer. Upholder of Fascism.
 Charlemaigne (768-814) French Emperor.
 Charron, Pierre (1541-1603) French Theologian and Philosopher.
 Chateaubriand, Francois Rene de (1768-1848) French Writer.
 Chaumette, Pierre Gaspard (1763-1794) French Revolutionist.
 Cicero, Marcus Tullius (106-43 B.C.) Greatest Roman Orator.
 Clarendon, Edward Hyde. 1st. Earl of Clarendon (1609-1674) British Statesman and Historian.
 Coleridge, Samuel Taylor (1772-1834) English Poet.
 Columbus, Christopher (1451-1506) Italian Navigator.
 Comte, Auguste (1798-1857) French Sociologist and Philosopher.
 Condilac (1715-1780) French Encyclopedist.
 Considerant, Victor Prasper (1808-93) French Social Theorist. Follower Fourier.
 Constant de Rebecque Benjamin (1767-1830) French Writer and Politician.
 Copernicus, Nicolaus (1473-1543) Polish Astronomer.
 corneille, Pierre (1606-84) French Dramatist.
 Croce, Benedetto (1866-1952) Italian Philosopher.
 Cromwell, Oliver (1599-1658) Lord Protector of England.
 Couthon, Georges (1755-1794) French Revolutionist.
 Cuoco, Vincent (1770-1823) Italian Philosopher.
 Cudworth, Ralph (1617-88) English Theologian and Philosopher.
 Cumberland, Bishop (1632-1718) British Ethical Thinker.
 Cuvier, George Leopold Chretien Frederic Dagobert, Barn (1769-1832) French Naturalist.

 Dante, Alighieri (1265-1321) Italian Poet.
 Danton, George-Jacques (1759-94) French Revolutionist.
 Darwin, Erasmus (1731-1802) English evolutionist, Physician, Poet and Grandfather of Charles Darwin.
 Darwin, Charles Robert (1809-82) English Naturalist and Evolutionist.
 Defoe, Daniel (c.1660-1731) English Writer. Author of *Robinson Crusoe*.
 Democritus (fl.460 B.C.) Greek Philosopher.
 Descartes, Rene (1596-1650) French Mathematician and Philosopher.
 Dewey, John (1859-1952). American Philosopher
 Diderot, Denis (1713-1784) French Encyclopedist.
 Diogenes of Apollonia (5th Century B.C.) Greek Philosopher.
 Dionysius of Helicarnasus (fl. late 1st. Century B.C.) Greek Rhetorician and Historian.
 Dryden, John (1631-1700) English Dramatist, Poet and Critic.
 Du Barry, Comtesse (c.1743-1793) Mistress of Luis XVth of France.
 Dubos, Jean-Baptiste (1670-1742) French Author and Historian.
 Duhring, Eugene Karl (1833-1921) German Philosopher and Economist.

Dun Scotus (c.1265-1308) Scottish Theologian.

Einstein, Albert (1879-1955) German Physicist. In 1940 he became an American Citizen.

Enfantine, Berthelemy Prosper (1796-1864) French Socialist. Sometimes called Pere Enfantin.

Engels, Friedrich (1820-1895) German Socialist. Collaborator of Karl Marx.

Epicurus (c.342-270 B.C.) Greek Philosopher.

Erasmus, Desiderius (c.1466-1536) Dutch Scholar and Humanist.

Erigena, Johannes, Scotus (c.815-c.877) Scottish-Irish Philosopher and Theologian.

Euclid (fl.300 B.C.) Greek Mathematician. His Elements has been accepted as a Geometric Text for over 2000 years.

Euler, Leonhard (1707-1783) Swiss Mathematician.

Euripides (b.480 or 485 B.C. died 406 B.C.) Greek Tragic Dramatist.

Eusebius of Caesaria or Eusebius Pomphili (c.263-c.339) Greek Appologist and Church Historian.

Faguet, Emile (1847-1916) French Literary Critic.

Feltre, Vittorino de. He established the first great school of the Renaissance at Mantua (Italy) where he resided for the last twenty-two years of his life (124-1446).

In this school Greek and Latin Classics were taught.

Fenelon, Bertrand de Salignac (1523-1589) French Diplomat.

Fenelon, Francois de Salignac de la Mathe (1651-1715) French Theologian and Writer.

Feuerbach, Ludwig Andreas (1804-72) German Philosopher.

Fichte, Johann Gottlieb (1762-1814) German Philosopher.

Ficino, Marsilio (1433-99) Italian Philosopher.

Filmer, Robert (d.1653) English Political Writer.

Fischort, Johann (1548-1590) German Satirist and Moralist.

Firth, Charles Harding (1857-1936) British Historian.

Flint, Robert (1838-1910) English Philosopher of History and Historian.

Fontanelle, Bernard Le Bovier de (1657-1757) French Literateur.

Fouche, Joseph (1763-1820) French Revolutionist.

Fouille, Alfred Jules Emile (1838-1912) French Philosopher and Sociologist.

Fourier, Francois Maries Charles (1772-1837) French Social Reformer.

Fourier, Jean Baptiste Joseph, Barn (1768-1830) French Mathematicia.

France, Anatole, Pseudo Name: Jacques Anatole Thibault (1844-1924) French Novelist.

Francis of Assisi, Saint (1182-1226) Italian Founder of the Franciscan Order of Christianity.

Frazer, Sir James George (1854-1941) Scottish Classicist and Anthropologist.

Frenssen, Gustav (1863-1945) German Novelist.

Freud, Sigmund (1856-1939) Austrian Medical Man. Founder of Psychoanalysis

Galen (c.130-c.200) Greek Physician and Writer

Galilei, Galileo (1564-1642) Italian Physicist.

Gama, Vasco da (c.1460-1524) Portugese Navigator

Gassendi, Pierre (1592-1655) French philosopher.

Gay, John (1685-1732) English Poet

- Gentile, Giovanni (1875-1944) Italian Philosopher
- George, Stefan (1868-1933) German poet. Leader of Revolt Against realism in Literature.
- George of Trebizond (1396-1486) Translator of Aristotle into Latin
- Ghazali, al (1058-1111) Persian born Arab Philosopher
- Ghiberti, Lorenzo (c. 1378-1455) Florentine Sculptor
- Gibbon, Edward (1737-94) English Historian
- Gilbert, William (1544-1603) Most distinguished man of science during the reign of Queen Elizabeth
- Giotto, Bondone de (c.1266-c.1337) Florentine Painter and Architect
- Godwin, William (1756-1836) English Political Thinker
- Goethe, von Johann Wolfgang (1749-1832). German, Poet, Dramatist, Thinker and Humanist
- Gottschalk or Gottschalk (d.c.868). German Theologian
- Gottsched, Johann Christoph (1700-1769). German Author and Critic
- Granville, Antoine Perrenot Cardinal de (1517-86). French Statesman. A part of his magnificent Library is still preserved in Besancon (France).
- Gratian (359-83). Roman Emperor
- Gravina, Gian Vincenzo (1664-1718). Italian Liteateur.
- Gray, John. British Author of A Lecture on Human Happiness (1825) and The Social System (1831)
- Gray, John Edward (1800-1875) English Naturalist.
- Green, Thomas Hill (1836-1882). English Philosopher.
- Grimm, Wilhelm German Professor at Gottingen Removed from office by King Ernest Augustus of Hanover for protesting against the abrogation of the Hanoverian constitution of 1833. "Gottinger Seven" in addition to Grimm included Dahlman and face of Grimm.
- Grimmelhausen, Hans Jakob Christoffel von (c.1626-1676) German Literatureur
- Grotius, Hugo (1583-1645). Dutch Jurist and Statesman.
- Guesde, Jules (1845-1922). French Socialist whose real name was Basile
- Guizot, Francois Pierre Guillaume (187-1874) French Historian and Statesman.
- Gutenberg, Johann (c.1397-1468). German Printer. First European Printer to print with movable types cast in molds.
- Gutzkow, Karl Ferdinand (1811-78). German Writer.
- Hallam, Henry (1777-1859). English Historian.
- Hall, Charles (c.1745-c.1825). English Physician.
- Hamann, Johann George (1730-88). German Theologian.
- Hanriot, Francois (1761-1794) French Revolutionist.
- Harrington, James (1611-77). English Political Writer.
- Hartley, David (1705-57). English Physician and philosopher; founder of Associationist Psychology.
- Harun-al-Rashid (c.764-809). Abbasid Caliph.
- Harvey, William (178-1659). English Physician.
- Hebert, Jacques-Rene (1759-94). French Revolutionist.
- Hegel, George Wilhelm Friedrich (1770-1831). German Philosopher.
- Heine, Heinrich V, (1797-1856). German Poet.

- Heinemann, Gustar—Minister of the Interior of German Federal Republic Resigned in 1950. Elected President in 1969 for a short while.
- Helmont, Jean Riptiste van (1577-1644). Flemish Scientist
- Helvetius, Claude-Adrian (1715-71). French Philosopher
- Heracitus (c. 535-c. 475 B.C.). Greek Philosopher.
- Herauld de Sechelles, Marie Jean (1759-94) French Revolutionist.
- Herder, Johan Gottfried (1744-1805). German Philosopher.
- Hess, Moses (1812-75). German Socialist.
- Hipparchus (2nd Century B.C.) greek Astronomer.
- Hippocrates (c. 460-c. 370 B.C.) Greek Father of Medicine.)
- Hitler, Adolf (1889-1945). German Nazi Dictator.
- Hobbes, Thomas (1588-1679). English Philosopher.
- Hobhouse, Leonard Trelawney (1864-1929). English Sociologist and Philosopher.
- Hodgskin, Thomas (Late 18th and 1st half of 19th Century) English Land Reformer and Radical Writer.
- Holbach, Baron Paul-Henri-Dietrich d' (1723-1789). French Philosopher.
- Holbein, Hans (c. 1465-1524). German Painter.
- Holderlin, Friedrich (1770-1843) German Poet.
- Holcroft, Thomas (1745-1809). English dramatist and novelist.
- Hooker, richard (1553-1600). English Author.
- Hotman, Francis (1524-90). French Jurist.
- Houser, Karper (c. 1812-1833). A mysterious German foundling; a psychopath, died of knife wounds.
- Hugo, Victor (1802-85). French literateur.
- Humboldt, William von (1767-1835) German Philosopher.
- Hume David (1711-76) Scottish Philosopher and historian.
- Hunter, William (1718-83) Scottish Physician.
- Huss, John (c. 1269-1415) Czech Religious Reformer.
- Hutten, Ulrich von (1488-1523) German Poet and Humanist.
- Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) Arab Historiographer.
- Jahn, Friedrich Ludwig (1778-1852). German Racist Nationalist.
- Jaures, Jean (1859-1914) French Socialist Leader and Historian.
- James, William (1842-1910) American Philosopher.
- Jefferies, Richard (1848-1887). English Naturalist and Author.
- Jerome, Emiliani (Girolamo Miani: 1481-1537) Italian Founder of the Someschi—A Clerical Order, specialising in the care of Orphans.
- Jerome, Eusebius Hieronymus (c. 345-c. 419) Italian Biblical Scholar.
- Jerome of Prague (c. 1317-1416). Bohemian Reformer.
- Justinian I (483-565) Byzantine Emperor (527-565).
- Justinian II—Justinian Rhinotmetus (669-711). Byzantine Emperor (705-711).
- Kant, Immanuel (1724-1804) German Philosopher.
- Kepler, Johann (1571-1630) German Astronomer.
- Kleist, Heinrich von (1771-1811) German Literateur.
- Klopstock, Gottlieb Friedrich (1724-1804) German Poet.

- Labriola (1843-1904) Italian Politician.
- Lacordaire, Jean Baptiste Henri (1802-61) French Roman Catholic Preacher.
- Lafargue, Paul (1842-1911) French Socialist.
- Lagarde, Paul Anton de (1827-91). German Orientalist.
- Lagau, Friedrich Freiherr von (1604-1655) German Epigrammatist.
- Lagrange, Joseph Louis (1736-1813). French Mathematician.
- Lamartine, Alphonse Marie Louis de (1790-1869) French Poet, Novelist and Statesman.
- Lamennais (1782-1854). French Advocate of Separation of Church and State.
- Lange, Friedrich Albert (1828-1875) German Philosopher.
- Lanjuinais, Jean Denis, Comte (1753-1827). French Politician.
- La Mettrie (1709-51) Founder of French Materialism.
- Laplace, Pierre Simon, Marquis de (1749-1827) French Mathematician and Astronomer.
- La Revelliere Lepeaun, Louis Marie De (1753-1824) French Politician. Member of the Directory.
- La Rochefoucauld, de (1613-1680), French Writer and Moralist.
- Laski, Harold Joseph (193-1950). English Political Scientist.
- Lassalle, Ferdinand (1825-64). German Socialist.
- Laube, Heinrich Rudolf (1806-84) German Novelist.
- Lavoisier, Antoine Laurent (1743-94) French Founder of Modern Chemistry.
- Leibniz, Gottfried William, Baron von (1643-1715) German Philosopher and mathematician.
- Le Maitre, Nicoloz (fl. 1729) French Organist with whom Rousseau stayed in 1729-30.
- Lenin, Nikolai (1870-1924). Founder of U.S.S.R.
- Le Revelliere-Lepeaux (1753-1824) French Materialist Philosopher.
- Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim (1729-81) German Critic and Literateur.
- Leucippus (5th Century B.C.) Greek Philosopher.
- Liebig, Justin, Baron von (1803-73) German Chemist.
- Locke, John (1632-1704) English Philosopher.
- Lohenstein, D.C. von (1665-1684) German Dramatist.
- Lotze, Rudolf Hermann (1817-81). German Philosopher.
- Lubbock, Sir John (1834-1913) English Statesmen and Naturalist.
- Lucretius (c. 46-c. 120) Roman Poet.
- Mably, Gabriel Bonnot de (1709-85) French Encyclopedist.
- Machiavelli, Niccolo (1469-1527). Italian Political Thinker.
- Mackintosh, James (1765-1832). Scottish Author and leading Whig Statesman.
- Magellan, Ferdinand (c. 1480-1521). Portuguese Navigator.
- Maistre, Joseph de (c. 1754-1821) French Diplomat.
- Malebranche, Nicolas (1638-1715) French Philosopher.
- Malesherbes, Chretien Guillaume de Lamoignon de (1721-94). French Statesmen; helped in the publication of Encyclopedia.
- Marat, Jean-Paul (1743-93) Swiss-born French Revolutionary.
- Marini, Giambattista (1569-1625) Italian Poet.
- Marinismo. The highly elaborated style of the Italian Poet Marino, Giambattista (1569-1625) was called Marinismo.
- Maritain, Jacques (b. 1882) French neo-Thomist Philosopher.

- Marnix, Philip van (1540-98). Flemish Patriot and anti-Catholic.
- Marsiglio of Padua (c. 1275-1342) Italian Political Philosopher and Jurist.
- Marx, Karl (1818-1883) German Political Philosopher and Communist.
- Maupertius, Pierre-Louis Moreau de (1789-1759) French Mathematician and Astronomer.
- Medici, Lorenzo de' (1449-92). Florentine Statesman, Ruler and Patron of Art.
- Melanchthon, Philip (1497-1560) German Scholar and Humanist.
- Marnix, Philip van (1540-98). Flemish Patriot.
- Michaelet, Jules (1798-1874) French Historian.
- Mignet, Francis Auguste Marie (1796-1884) French Historian.
- Mill, James Stuart (1773-1836). Scottish Philosopher, Economist and Historian. Father of John Stuart Mill.
- Mill, John Stuart (1806-75) Scottish Philosopher.
- Milton, John (1608-74). English Poet. A substantial Part of his writings is in Latin.
- Mirabeau, Honre-Gabriel-Victor Riqueti Comte de (1749-91) French Revolutionary.
- Moleschott (1822-93) German Young Hegelian.
- Montalembert, Charles Forbes, Comte de (1810-70) French Statesman and Author.
- Moreau De Saint Mery, Mederic Louis Elie (1750-1819) French Politician.
- More, Sir Thomas (1478-1535) English statesman and Martyr.
- Morelly, (fl.1755) French Socialist.
- Morgan, Lewis Henry (1818-81) American Anthropologist.
- Mueller, Johannes von (1752-1809) Swiss Historian.
- Muller, Adam (1779-1829) German Romantic.
- Muller Johannes von (1752-1809) Swiss Historian.
- Muller, Max or Friedrich, Maximilian Muller (1923-1900) German Philologist and Orientalist.
- Mundt, Theodor (1808-1861) German Critic. Wrote extensively on Aesthetics.
- Munner, Thomas (1475-1537) German Satirist.
- Mussolini, Benito (1883-1945) Italian Fascist Dictator.
- Myres, Sir John Linton (1869-1954) British Archaeologist and Historian.
- Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) Emperor of France (1804-1815)
- Necker, Jacques (1732-1804) French Financier. Finance Minister of Louis XVI.
- Newton, Sir Isac (1624-1727) British Scientist.
- Nicolus of Cusa (1401-1464) German Philosopher.
- Niebhur Reinhold (b. 1892) American Religious Social Thinker.
- Neitzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm (1844-1900) German Philosopher.
- Novalis, Pseud. Friederich von Hardenberg (1772-1801) German Poet and Romanticist.
- Opitz, Martin (1597-1639) Leader of the Silesian School of German Poetry
- Paine, Thomas (1737-1809) American Political Theorist.
- Paley, William (1743-1805) English Philosopher and divine
- Paracelsus, Philippus Aureolus (c. 1493-1541) Swiss Physician.
- Pareto Vilfredo (1848-1923) Italian Economist and Sociologist.
- Pascal, Blaise (1623-62) French Mathematician and Philosopher.

- Payan, C.F.de, A devoted adherent of Robespierre. Elected Procureur of the Commune. French Revolutionist.
- Pericles (d. 429 B.C.) Athenian Statesman.
- Perrault, Claude (1613-1688) French Translator of Vitruvius and Architect of the Louvre.
- Petion, De Villeneuve Jerome (1756-94) French Revolutionist.
- Petrarch or Francesco Petrarca (1304-74) Italian Poet.
- Pico della Mirandola, Giovanni (1463-94) Italian Philosopher.
- Plato (c. 427-347 B.C.) Greek Philosopher.
- Poggio Bracciolini, Giovanni Francesco (1380-1459) Italian Scholar. Restorer of many forgotten pieces of Latin literature.
- Pompadour, Jeanne Antoinette Poisson Le Normant d' Etole, Marquise de (1721-64). She was Louis XV the's Mistress for about five years after 1745. She helped Voltaire and other French Encyclopedists.
- Pomponazzi, Pietro (1462-1525) Italian Philosopher.
- Powell, Frederick York (1850-1904) English Historian.
- Priestly, Joseph (1733-1804) English theologian and Scientist.
- Protagoras (c. 480-c. 410 B.C.) Greek Sophist Philosopher.
- Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph (1809-65) French Political Writer.
- Ptolemy or Claudius Ptolemaeus (fl. from 127 to 141 or 151) Greco-Egyptian Mathematician, Astronomer and Geographer.
- Pufendorf, Samuel von (1632-94) German Jurist and Historian.
- Pythagoras (c. 582-c.507 B.C.) Greek Philosopher and Mathematician.
- Quesnay, Francis (1694-1774) French Economist; Physiocrat.
- Quinet, Edgar (1803-75) French Historian.
- Rabaut, Saint-Etienne Jean Paul (1743-1793) French Revolutionist.
- Rabelais, Francois (1495-1555) French Writer.
- Racine, Jean Baptiste (1639-99) French Literateur.
- Ramus, Pierre de La (1551-1572) French anti-Aristotelian Philosopher.
- Ranke, Leopold von (1795-1886) German Historian.
- Raphael, Santi or Raphael Sansio (1483-1520) Italian painter.
- Renan, E. (1823-92) German Writer.
- Renault, Louis (1843-1918) French Jurist.
- Renouvier, Charles Bernard (1815-1903) French Philosopher.
- Reuchlin, Johann (1455-1521) German Humanist and Scholar of Greek, Latin and Hebrew.
- Ricardo, David (1772-1823) British Economist of Dutch Parentage.
- Richelieu, Armand jean de Plessis, duc de, Cardinal (1585-1642) French Prelate and Statesman, Minister of Louis XIII.
- Reinzi, cola de (c. 1313-1354) Roman classical Scholar.
- Rivers, William Halse (1864-1922) British Anthropologist.
- Robespierre, Maximillian Maries Isidore (1758-94) One of the leading figures of the French Revolution.
- Robinet, Jean Baptiste (18th Century) French Materialist Philosopher.
- Rocquin, Abbot. he in 1890 discovered at Avignon that printing was practised there in 1444-46. Printing started at Strassburg from 1436-1439. Avignon took the second place in the history of Printing.

Roland, Madam (Roland de la Mastiere, Jean Maries: 1734-93) French Revolutionist.
 Roland, de la Platiere Jeanne-Mannon, nee Philipon (1754-93) French Revolutionist.
 Roscellinus also called Johannes Roscellinus and Jean Roscelin (fl.1092-1119) Scholastic Philosopher.

Rosenberg, Alfred (1893-1946) German Fascist theoretician, Executed
 Rousseau, Jean Jacques (1711-1778) Swiss-born Philosopher.
 Royer-Collard, Pierre Paul (1763-1845) French Philosophwe.

Sebatier, Auguste (1839-1901) French Theologian.

Sachs, Hans (1494-1576) German Poet.

Sadoletto, Jacopo (1477-1547) Italian Humanist.

Saint-Simon, Claude Henri de Rouvroy, comte de (1760-1825). French Philosopher.

Saint Just, Antoine Louis De Richenbourg d. (1767-1794) French Revolutionist.

Savigny, Friedrich Karl von(1779-1861) German Jurist.

Savonarola, Girolamo (1452-98) Italian religious reformer. Hanged for his religious views.

Schelling, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph (1775-1814) German Philosopher.

Schiller, Friedrich (1759-1804) German Poet.

Schlegel, August Wilhe, vpm (1767-1845) German Scholar and Poet.

Schlegel, Friedrich von (1772-1829) German Philosopher, Critic and Romanticist.

Schleiermacher, Friedrich Daniel Ernst (1768-1834) German Protestant Theologian

Schopenhauer, Arthur (1788-1860) German Philosopher.

Servetus, Michael (1511-33) Spanish Theologian.

Shaftsbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper (1671-1713) English Philosopher.

Shakespeare, William (1564-1616) English Dramatist and Poet.

Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft (1797-1822) English Poet.

Sidney, Algernon (1622-83) English Political Writer.

Sismondi, Jean Charles Leonard Simonde de (1773-1842). Swiss Historian, Economist and Critic.

Smith, Adam (1723-1790) British Economist.

Socrates(c. 470-399 B.C). Greek Philosopher.

Sombert, Werner (1863-1941) German Economist.

Sorel, Georges (1841-1922) French Social Philosopher

Sorokin, Pitrim Alexandrovitch (b. 1889) Russian-American Sociologist.

Southey, Robert (1774-1842) English Author.

Spencer, Herbert (1820-1903) English Philosopher.

Spengler, Oswald (1880-1936) German Philosopher.

Spinoza Baruch (1632-77) German Philosopher.

Stael, Madame Germaine de (1766-1817). Her full name was Anne Louise Germaine Necker, baronne de Stael-Holstein. French-Swiss lady of letters.

Stephen, Sir James Fitzjames (1829-1894) English Jurist.

Stein, Karl Freicher vom Undzum (1757-1831) Prussian Reformer.

Stein, Lorenz von (1815-90) German Economist and Sociologist.

Stewart, Dugald (1753-1828) Scottish Philosopher.

Stirner, Max, pseud. Kasper Schmidt. (1806-56) German Philosopher.

Strauss, David Friedrich (1808-74) German Philosopher.

Sydney, Algernon (1622-83) English Republican.

- Tacitus, Cornelius (c. 55-c. 117) Roman Historian.
- Taine, Hippolyte Adolphe (1828-1893) French Philosopher and Critic.
- Tallien, Jean Lambert (1767-1820) French Revolutionist.
- Tawney, R.H. (1880-1962) English Economic Historian.
- Tellesio, Bernardino (1509-88) Italian anti-Aristotelian Philosopher.
- Thales (c. 636-546 B.C.) Greek Philosopher.
- Theodoric the Great (c. 454-526) King of the Ostrogoths.
- Theophrastus (c.372-c.287 B.C.) Greek Philosopher.
- Thierry, Augustin (1795-1856) French Historian.
- Theophilus, Bishop. Acting on Theodosius's decree concerning Pagan Monuments, the Library at Alexandria was pillaged in 389 A.D. under his rule.
- Thomasius, Christian (1655-1728) German Jurist.
- Thomson, William Kelvin (1824-1907) Irish Mathematician and Physicist.
- Thucydides (c. 460- c.400 B.C.) Greek Historian.
- Titan (Tiziano Vecellio: c. 1490-1575) Venetian Painter.
- Toland, Johan (1670-1722) British Deist.
- Toscanelli, Paolo dal Pozzo (1397-1482) Italian Cosmographer and Mathematician.
- Tracy, Destt de, Antoine Louis Claude, Comte (1754-1836) French Philosopher and Psychologist.
- Treitzschke, Heinrich von (1834-96) German Historian.
- Tucker, Abraham (1705-1774) English Moralist and Divine.
- Turgot, Anne-Robert -Jacques, Baron de l'Aulme (1727-81) French Economist.
- Tylor, Sir Edward Burnet (1833-1917) English Anthropologist.
- Valla, Lorenzo (c. 1407-1457) Italian Humanist.
- Verginand, Pierre Victorien (1753-93) French Revolutionist.
- Vico, Giambattista Battista (1668-1744) Italian Philosopher and Historiographer.
- Villani, Matteo (d. 1363) Italian Chronicler; father of Villani Filippo who continued the work of his father and uncle.
- Vinci, Leonardo da (1451-1519) Italian Renaissance Incarnate.
- Virgil (Publius Vergilius Maro: (70 B.C.—19 B.C.) Roman Poet.
- Vischer, Peter (c. 1455-1529) German Sculptor; foremost of the Bronze Founders of Germany.
- Vogt, Karl (1817-95) German Naturalist.
- Voltaire, Francois Marie Arouet (1694-1778) French Revolutionary Philosopher.
- Wagner, Richard (1813-83) German Composer.
- Wagner, Rudolf (1805-1864) German Anatomist and Physiologist.
- Weber, Karl Maria Friedrich Ernst von (1786-1826) Founder of German Romantic Opera.
- Weber, Max (1864-1930) German Economist and Sociologist.
- Westermarck, Edward Alexander (1862-1939) Finnish Philosopher and Anthropologist.
- William of Occam (d. c. 1349) English Scholastic Theologian.
- Windelband, Wilhelm (1848-1915) German Philosopher.
- Winckelmann, Johann Joachim (1717-88) German classical Archaeologist and historian of Art.

Wolff, Christian (1671-1754) Polish Philosopher. First to write Philosophy in German.

Wordsworth, William (1770-1850) English Poet.

Wollstonecraft, Mary (1759-97) English Feminist; wife of Godwin and mother-in-law of Poet Shelly

Wycliffe, John (c.1328-1384) English Reformer

Xenophanes (c. 570-c. 480 B.C.) Greek Philosopher.

Zwingli, Huldreich or Ulrich (1484-1531) Swiss Protestant Reformer.

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